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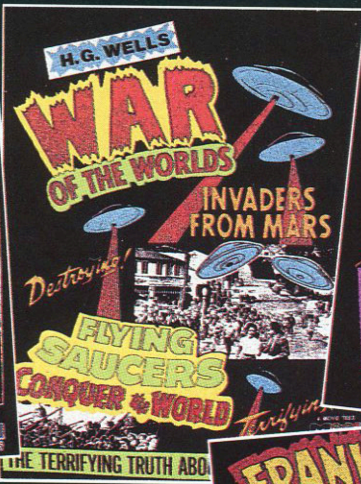
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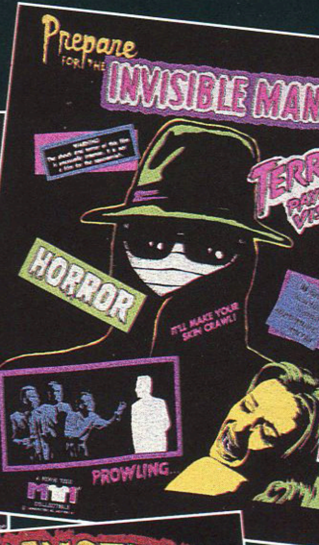
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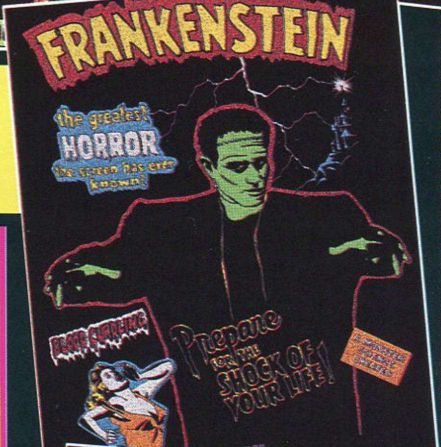
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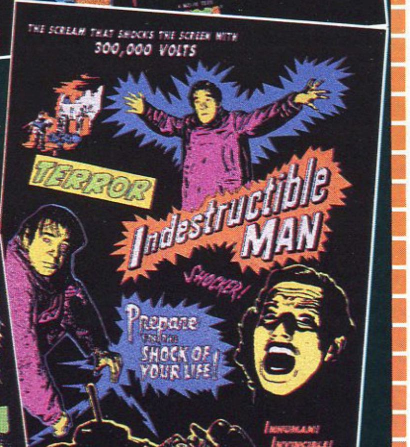
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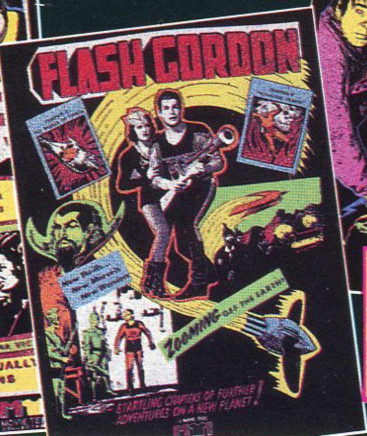
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BLOOD FEST

Dial Horror

It's Friday afternoon. I'm several weeks late on this editorial. Time is running out, and I must come up with another Blood Fest topic. Oh, but if only the phone would stop ringing!

Hey, it's Clive Barker on the line. And Clive's not happy. He tells me that he's upset with the way 20th Century Fox "threw away" his epic *Nightbreed* and failed to market the movie properly. He wants to use the pages of FANGORIA to make the whole dirty story known, and I'll be interviewing him next week. But that's for the FANGORIA editorial. What about GOREZONE's? I start to jot down some notes, when the phone rings again.

And it's Kane Hodder! Yes, friends, Jason does speak, and he wants me to know that he will attend the next few FANGORIA's *Weekend of Horrors* conventions, starting with the Los Angeles event, May 12-13, at the Airport Hilton & Towers.

Then there's another call. It's Tom Savini, phoning from Pittsburgh. Let's see what the makeup-artist-turned-*Dead*-director has to say.

"We go into preproduction on Monday," Savini breathlessly divulges. "The remake is finally happening." Yes, it's true! Come Halloween, there will be a new version of *Night of the Living Dead* in theaters, directed by Savini, produced by John Russo and Russell Streiner and written and executive-produced by George A. Romero.

I'm dying to get this afternoon's worth of horror news out to you readers, but due to publishing lead time, you won't read this amazing info until three months after I write it. But wait! Another call. It's my boss, Norman Jacobs, who has a proposition for me. Our company and UCI Dial-It Promotions have just created (900) 420-FANG, a horror hotline of up-to-the-minute news, gossip, movie and video reviews (before they come out), set reports, convention updates, film release schedules and much, much more. And they want you to call *me*! See, I will be writing and recording these FANGORIA/GOREZONE news segments, and a fresh one can be heard every day, 24 hours a day! Starting May 1, 1990, all you need to do is dial (900) 420-FANG and part with $2 to learn the latest scoops. See the ad on this page for further details. So call me. We can't do lunch, but you'll never hear a busy signal.

—Anthony Timpone,
Editor

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GUT reactions

What's Bruce Campbell smiling about? Heck, he's excited about his upcoming appearances at the next two FANGORIA's *Weekend of Horrors*, May 12-13 at the Los Angeles Airport Hilton & Towers and June 9-10 at San Jose's Lebaron Hotel. The bloody party continues July 7-8 at Boston's 57 Park Plaza. Call (516) SHOWMAN for details or see ad on page 5.

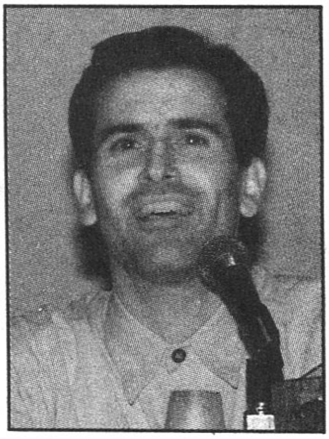


Photo: Kathy Voglesong

Photo: Copyright Troma

Contrary to popular belief, Clair (Phoebe Legere) isn't the only one who loves the Toxic Avenger.

"LEATHERFACE" LAMBASTED!

...What the hell happened to *Leatherface: Texas Chainsaw Massacre III*? It was the biggest disappointment in movie sequels *ever*! The first two *Chainsaw* movies were superior, but *Leatherface* lacked continuity, gore and the atmosphere of the first two. Tobe Hooper must be pissed at Jeff Burr for disgracing the legend of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. Where the hell did Burr get off giving Leatherface two brothers, a mom and a *daughter*, of all things? They should have either left it at two *Chainsaws* or waited until Tobe Hooper felt the time was right to write and direct the third. He, and no one else, can give *Chainsaw* movies the distinct quality they deserve. And to Mr. Burr, you wasted your time and ours. Burr has changed the legacy and reputation of *The Texas Chainsaw Massacre*. He doesn't deserve a single handshake for the worst sequel effort in history.

Tony and Bryant
Oak Forest, IL

NAME THAT FLICK!

...A long time ago, when I was just metamorphosing into an unbelievably gory character, I caught a short glimpse of a horror flick, but I can't remember what it is called. I do remember that what I saw was a young man in a church, floating down the aisle, when a priest approached him and kneeled before him. The "floating guy" unveiled a large sword and slapped the priest's head with it. Then he finds another guy hiding behind one of the benches. He holds him against the wall by the neck, and shoves his hand into the poor guy's stomach.

Ronni Stirling
Flat 3/2, 23 Mayfield Street
Ruchill, Glasgow, G20 9RQ
Scotland

Our guess is Fear No Evil, *a 1981 offering from director Frank LaLoggia.*

"TOXIC" OPTIMISM!

...After reading your preview of *The Toxic Avenger, Part III* in GOREZONE #11, my hopes were raised for this sequel. *The Toxic Avenger* became one of my favorites; the storyline was surprising and entertaining. When I heard *Toxic Avenger II* was out on video, I rushed out and rented it, ignoring friends' comments that it wasn't worth renting. I expected an action-filled movie. Instead, Melvin wind-surfs to Japan to find his father and becomes friends with a shy Japanese girl.

Anyway, to say the least, I was not impressed. I hope *Toxic Avenger, Part III* is a masterpiece. I still have a little hope for Toxie.

Elizabeth Everest
84 Samac Trail
Oshawa, Ontario
Canada

YO, WATCHDOG!

...TNT has been showing many classic films, such as *Night of the Lepus*, *Cat People*, *Dark Star*, *Freaks*, *The Skull* and many more. I wonder if Tim Lucas can give us a clue on how complete the prints are, as I am thinking of keeping some of these in my permanent collection.

By the way, here's a suggestion: How about creating a GOREZONE poster magazine and taking the posters out of this otherwise excellent periodical?

Mark Sieber
5015 82nd Street
Newport News, VA 23605

...I was reading Video Watchdog, and Tim Lucas started talking about *Last House on the Left*. I read through the whole thing and just had to rent it. Well, I compared it with the list of edits in the good ol'

Watchdog, and guess what? It was intact, all the way from Phyllis peeing in her pants to the dialogue right before Mrs. Collingwood puts the bite on Weasel.

But that's not the point of my letter. After the credits, it said that there would soon be a part two. Is there any truth to this statement?

T-Bob Whitney
#6 Pinehurst Court
Columbia, Il 62236

You know as much as we do.

...I just reread the "Slashing of *Intruder*" in GOREZONE #11, and I'd like to make a suggestion. Do you think it would be possible to see *Intruder* released unrated to HBO? HBO hasn't totally lived up to their promise of airing movies uncut, but in the last few months they have featured the uncut versions of *Waxwork* and *Evil Dead II*. They've also had repeat showings of *Heavy Metal* for two months now. I don't think it's an impossible dream; Raimi and Spiegel already have an unrated track record with HBO, thanks to *Evil Dead II*. Even if they show these uncut films just once, on a Tuesday at 3:45 a.m., it would still be worth it.

What do you think? Is it worth a try, or should I just stop wasting brain cells thinking about it? Is there some place we could all write to show there is a definite interest in an unrated version of *Intruder*?

Rob Freeze
Huntsville, AL

Try HBO at 1100 Avenue of the Americas, New York, NY 10036.

BITE OR BE MUZZLED!

...The mist cleared for me recently, to reveal just how far things have gotten out of control. I was watching, of all things, *The Ghost and Mr. Chicken* on TBS. They completely removed the effectively Halloweenish scene where Mr. Chicken confronts the painted portrait of Mrs. Simmons, with garden shears stuck in the throat and blood flowing down the canvas. These small yet vocal coalitions have brought about the censoring of a G-rated Don Knotts comedy.

My fellow GoreZonians, it is time to get off your individual asses and write letters. Even if you've never written one letter in your life, it is time to start. The wolf is at the door. The core, the root of cathartic effect of any serious horror film, the *shock*, is at stake. It has become an endangered species. If you care about your constitutional right to be scared, write! Follow Tony Timpone's advice (Blood Fest, GOREZONE #12) now, before it gets worse. Censorship must be stopped. Fight/write! RISE! RISE!

Jim VanBebber
Mercury Films Inc.
Dayton, OH

...It's pathetic that these self-righteous, hypocritical groups condemn people like myself and countless others for being horror fans. Since I was 12 (I am now 21), I have been an avid horror fan. When I was at college (at a private institution, mind you) I walked into a bookstore and plopped down a few bucks for a copy of my favorite mag, GOREZONE, when a lady questioned my taste and looked at me oddly. She was so smug I wanted to slap her, but I smiled and said, "Is this what the world is coming to? Look, Ma'am, I don't care what you read or what you do at night, and you shouldn't be concerned as to what I read. The 11th commandment should be: Mind your own business. I happen to be an A student, and if reading a horror mag is going to make me a freaked-out psychotic mess, then I'm God." She was taken aback. And so I concluded that lovely discussion with, "Why don't YOU go and feed kids in Ethiopia or join the Peace Corps before you preach to people, huh?"

Honestly, I don't like movies that exploit women, but if someone else enjoys the movie, let them. I am concerned with what I like myself, and if I find a movie to be particularly offensive, I might make a comment but I would never take away another person's right to decide what he or she should or shouldn't watch or read.

I'm going to be sick!
RIP
GOREZONE
Marvin Jenkins 90

Art: Marvin Jenkins

I applaud your magazine and others like it. I want to be able to watch *Hellraiser* or *Shocker* or *Nightmare on Elm Street* without being harassed. I would like to buy rap or metal albums without those stupid labels on them. I am writing a letter to the Eagle's Nest, a conservative group pushing for censorship on everything that seems offensive to them (that's a hell of a lot), and I'd like to write a letter to a senator or even the president, if push comes to shove. In the meantime, keep up the great gore and let's work to defeat those hypocrites trying to intimidate us and ban our freedom to choose!

Michelle M. Muraoka
581 Park Meadow Drive
San Jose, CA 95129

FXIONATELY OURS!

...Your articles are great. Your pictures are better! But the real reason that I buy every issue of GOREZONE is to read Cag and Drex's Makeup FX lab, for I am an aspiring makeup artist. Like many others of my breed, I have an insatiable hunger for knowledge of this craft. My favorite articles are the ones where they get into the more advanced techniques, such as when Shostrom was moonlighting in the mag, and as seen in HORROR FX. I hope to see more of this detailed work in the future.

Amateur makeup artists' work suffers an incredible lack of exposure. My second humble request is that you reserve a section of the magazine that displays photos of work sent in by readers. This would not only get our work shown, but it would also give the pros an extra gallery of talents to choose assistants from.

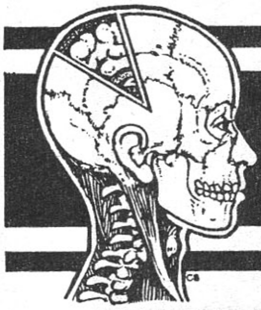
Sean Woolcock
1117 Riviera Drive
Wilson, NC 27893

OK, makeup beginners, send us samples of your work for possible inclusion in GZ's Gut Reactions. Sorry, we can not return any photos or send any correspondence back. Good luck!

TO REMOVE THE POSTERS:

Open the magazine to the center and unbend the staples; pry them up with a screwdriver to avoid punctured, bleeding fingers. After opening all staples, pull the posters out carefully, then bend the staples back to their original position in order to keep the rest of this wonderful magazine in working order.

Remember, address your letters, makeup photos or cartoons to GOREZONE Gut Reactions, 475 Park Avenue South, New York, NY 10016. Include a SASE if you want your art returned. Include a request for some famous person's address or phone number if you want us to laugh and throw out your letter. Sorry, absolutely no personal replies.



PIECE O'MIND

by Chas. Balun

Rich Little impersonates an ashtray in *The Grim Reaper*.

A Guy Named Joe

It's OK to hate the films of Joe D'Amato. Millions do, and without guilt. His work has been called insufferably dull, clumsy, incomprehensible, unendurable and worthless. And those are the good reviews. If making really lousy films was a punishable offense, D'Amato might get life without possibility of parole.

But hey, let's look on the bright side. Credit D'Amato's late '70s effort *Buried Alive* (a.k.a. *Buio Omega*, *Blue Holocaust* or *Beyond the Darkness*) for forcing noted horror poseur and genre parasite Elvira into temporarily reneging on her commitment to perform "hostess" duties on a series of films released on the Thriller video label. It seems our Ms. Priss was crying "moral outrage" over the contents of both D'Amato's film and Umberto Lenzi's *Make Them Die Slowly* (*Cannibal Ferox*, 1981) and so she refused to help promote either title. Sounds like a righteous endorsement of both films to me. Elvira knows about as much about the contemporary horror film as the PLO knows about bar mitzvahs.

There are even those peculiar genre elitists who'll argue that D'Amato is just a hopeless, terminal hack and summarily dismiss him as just a Jess Franco wannabe. Now, that's *really* low, like asking someone which smells worse—cat shit or dog shit?

In truth, though, D'Amato is strictly an acquired taste—much like creme sherry, caviar, Bill Cosby or self-flagellation. One man's meat is another man's quiche. D'Amato is certainly no piker; he's been making films since the '50s, and even his staunchest supporters sometimes wonder why he has only made a couple of films worth crowing about. American audiences have been spared the brunt of the D'Amato filmic assault, so therefore even the most dedicated connoisseur of Le Bad Cinema must usually confess to never having seen a D'Amato film on the big screen. It's even tough finding his stuff on the video shelves, but dogged persistence will eventually pay off. Someone you know may eventually slip and admit he's got all of D'Amato's *Black Emmanuelle* series as well as an uncut European print of *Porno Holocaust.* Oh, happy day.

Actually, even confirmed D'Amato bashers must admit that his uncredited production work on Michele Soavi's debut feature *Stagefright* (a.k.a. *Bloody Bird*, 1987) shows considerable future promise. Some wags in the British fan press have even gone so far as to suggest that Soavi's true mentor is really D'Amato and not Argento. After the Soavi/Argento collaboration on the recent *The Church* (a sort of unofficial *Demons 3*) garnered only lukewarm reviews in the foreign press, many have begun perceiving Soavi's handling of *Stagefright* as a real fluke.

No sense in arguing with a guy holding a chainsaw.

Stagefright Photo: Imperial

The press has rarely been cordial to D'Amato during his 20-year directorial career. Most certainly, no one has ever claimed that his first feature, *Death Smiles on a Murderer* (1973), was anything other than shit-on-a-stick. Despite repeated viewings, most critics are still unable to decipher the incoherent plot contrivances; all that most folk can remember is that Klaus Kinski plays a mad doctor and Ewa (*Candy*) Aulin becomes a reanimated corpse.

Well at least the stranded travelers in *The Grim Reaper* won't have to worry about sharks.

Part of the problem in tracking down the entire D'Amato oeuvre lies with the fact that he's made dozens of movies under different names: Aristide Massaccesi, Michael Wotruba, Peter Newton, David Hills, Steven Benson and Kevin Mancuso, to name but a few. Since D'Amato began his filmmaking career as a cinematographer, ofttimes he'll use two or three different names on films in which he performs multiple production roles. He's also been hard to nail down because D'Amato's an inveterate genre-hopper; he's done Westerns, sword & sandal epics, fantasies and hardcore porn as well as his more recognizable forays into the cannibal and gore arenas.

Some of his films are strange crossbred genre mutts that defy classification. *Emmanuelle Gli Ultimi Cannibali* ("Emmanuelle and the Last Cannibals," 1977) is equal parts sex, splatter and stupidity. It stars the vacant and minimally talented Laura Gemser as an unconvincing investigative journalist who appears to be perpetually in heat. For gore-hungry audiences, the film was retitled *Trap Them and Kill Them*; under either title, the film is far more bark than bite. Fans of the neoclassic sleaze epic *Doctor Butcher, M.D.* will be pleased to discover that lost among the cannibals with our winsome miss is none other than the ol' doc himself, Donald O'Brien. During one of the movie's most laughably inept gore FX, the butcheroo is torn in two by the cannibals via a cruddy little matte painting that simply covers up his lower body. The scene's brazen disregard for verisimilitude of any sort has become symptomatic of D'Amato's skewed world view.

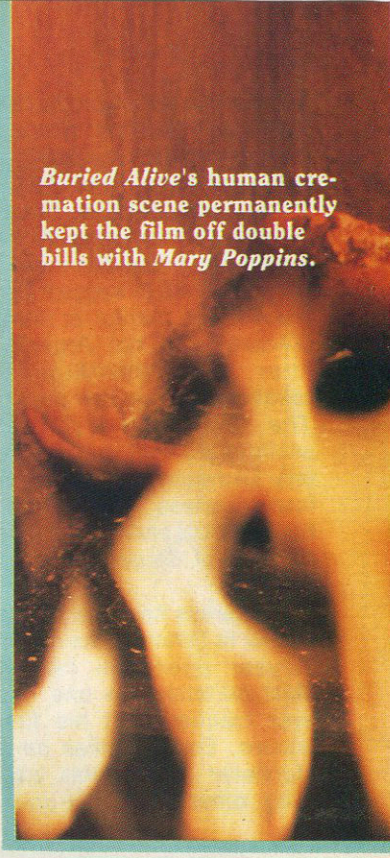
D'Amato is strictly an acquired taste— much like cream sherry, caviar, Bill Cosby or self-flagellation.

Two years later, D'Amato hit splatter paydirt with *Buried Alive*, a dangerously twisted and perverse tale of a loopy taxidermist's love for his dead girlfriend.

Photo: Courtesy Alan Jones

She *should* be screaming. We can only imagine what this chick's hairy armpits must smell like.

Devastated by her sudden demise, he digs her up, stuffs her and deposits the corpse up in his room. In the bed. Besides the less-than-subtle suggestions of sexual perversion, *Buried Alive* also offers a veritable catalog of splatter nasties, including autopsies, heart munching, dismemberments, acid baths, eye gougings and one hideously realistic crematorium sequence guaranteed to make you squirm. In fact, the filmmakers had been accused of mistreating *real* corpses during several questionable sequences. Despite heated controversy, both the autopsy and crematorium scenes remain intact in the U.S. video prints. It's a pretty tough little film—hard and unflinching—and while some detractors may call it sick, ghoulish and pandering, D'Amato aficionados are quick to rally to its support. Like it or not, it's really one of D'Amato's best.


***Buried Alive*'s human cremation scene permanently kept the film off double bills with *Mary Poppins*.**

In the next few years ('79-'81), D'Amato worked at a feverish pace, logging in a mind-boggling 21 films, including *Porno Holocaust*, *Blue Erotic Climax*, *Hard Sensations* and *Super Climax*. He was also first on the nascent zombie porn scene with a cute (albeit lame) film entitled, appropriately enough, *Le Notte Erotiche Dei Morti Viventi* (*Erotic Nights of the Living Dead / Queen of the Zombies*, 1980).

Gory surgery footage follows before the creature awakes from anesthesia, shoves a drill through a nurse's temples and escapes.

Among the nine films credited to the indefatigable D'Amato during 1980 is *Anthropophagus* (a.k.a. *The Grim Reaper)*, which introduced frequent collaborator Luigi Montefiori (George Eastman) as a gut-scarfing cannibal shipwrecked on an abandoned Greek isle. The film, billed as a story about "a man who eats himself," features Montefiore chowing down on a fresh fetus ripped from the belly of a pregnant woman as well as noshing down on his own entrails at film's end. Much to the chagrin of D'Amato's American fan club franchises, both scenes have been either severely truncated or clipped completely from all circulating U.S. prints.

Despite flaccid audience response to the original, D'Amato and Montefiore unleashed a sequel, *Anthropophagus II* (a.k.a. *Grim Reaper 2*), a year later. Montefiore reprises his role as the indestructible killer and is doggedly pursued by an obsessed priest warning the skeptical authorities that, indeed, the ghoul is "immortal." The film wastes no time in showing its true colors; Montefiore is impaled on a spiked fence in the first few minutes and then appears on someone's doorstep with his guts spilling out from

between his fingers. Gory surgery footage follows before the creature awakes from anesthesia, shoves a drill through a nurse's temples and escapes into the night. Other gruesome highlights include a head being shoved into an oven and baked bubbly, a couple of eye gougings and a climactic decapitation. Although bloody, none are especially convincing.

Perhaps Montefiore's performances in both films serve as apt metaphors for all of D'Amato's work; both are stupid, one-dimensional and lumbering, but somehow curiously likeable. And Montefiore, despite possessing the rugged good looks of a mountain gorilla and the acting ability of a russet potato, has not only appeared in numerous other Pasta Land actioners but has also played head stud in a number of D'Amato's hardcore porno films. Scary stuff, indeed.

Since the world has not yet beat a path to D'Amato's door demanding a third installment in the *Reaper* series, he has busied himself with such eclectic film choices as *Ator, The Fighting Eagle*, *Ator the Invincible*, *Orgasmo Infernai*, *2020 Texas Gladiators* and *Emmanuelle, Queen of Sados*. Are you yet beginning to grasp the awesome depth of this man's talents? I thought not.

But just when everyone had D'Amato safely pigeonholed as a prolific, pedestrian pissant of a filmmaker, along came Soavi's undeniably impressive *Stagefright*. Though D'Amato was uncredited, he contributed various production duties and served as a cameraman when the regular cinematographer left his post for another job. Soavi, an avowed Argento acolyte, gladly and openly acknowledged D'Ámato's assistance, though most fans mistakenly credit Argento for the relative success the film has enjoyed. Even the *Reaper* himself, Luigi Montefiore, was on board, receiving screen credit as "Lew Cooper" for his original screenplay. Incredible, but true. However, rumors that D'Amato and Montefiore will again team up for *Alien III* have proven patently untrue.

C'mon, in a world that has embraced Milli Vanilli, the $100 tennis shoe, designer water and Barbara Bush, even D'Amato's cockeyed cosmos is beginning to make more sense. Viva lé Joe!

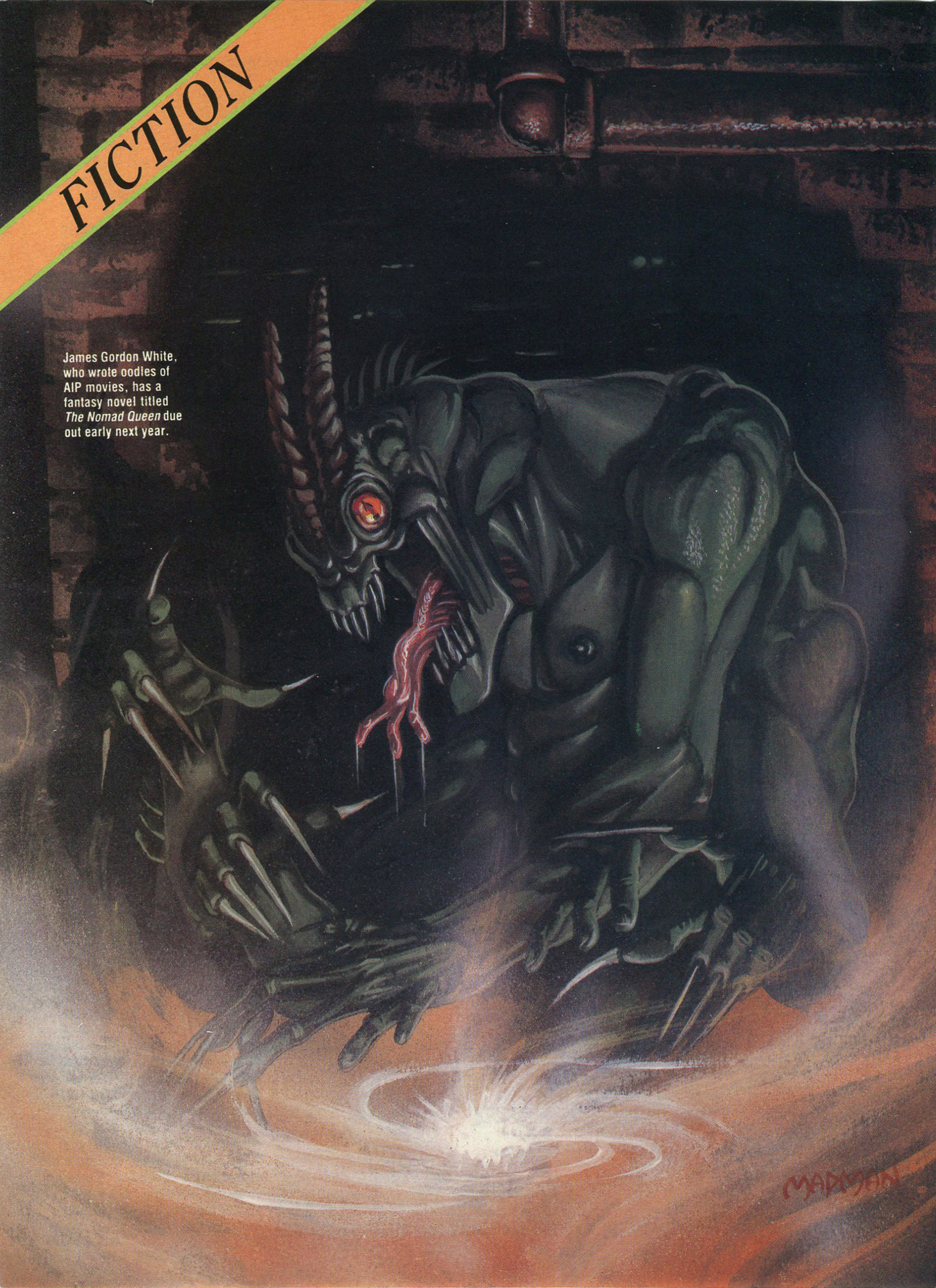
Many have given their lives in the pursuit of more effective hearing aids. (From *Absurd*)

Photo: Courtesy Martin Coxhead

D'Amato's *Buried Alive* shows that mortuary science could be fun for one and all.

Photo: Courtesy Martin Coxhead

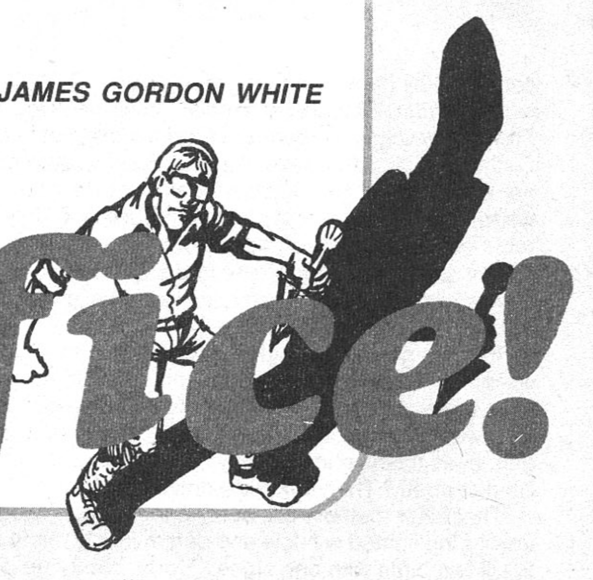
FICTION



James Gordon White, who wrote oodles of AIP movies, has a fantasy novel titled *The Nomad Queen* due out early next year.

Sacrifice!

By JAMES GORDON WHITE



In the dark basement of his late but not lamented uncle's home, Roger Marsh was concluding his weekly money ritual with the demon Armas, another of his uncle's legacies. "Armas, there are only twenty-five coins here," Roger said peevishly, as he stared at the gold coins scattered about the floor. "Quit holding back."

The towering reptilian being switched his long, pointed tail and wearily shook his huge, scaly head. "You are even greedier than your uncle," the demon admonished, saliva drooling from his mouth, his sharp fangs prominent. "I have told you before: The souls of lesser creatures bring you lesser coin. Now, were you to give me the soul of a young virgin, then I could be extremely generous."

"Will you come off it?" Roger groaned. "Virgins are an endangered species in this day and age."

Armas pointed a long-nailed finger down at the thick open book on the stone altar. "When those ancient incantations were first recorded, a virgin meant an unmarried woman—not one who had yet to lie with a man."

> **"The souls of lesser creatures bring you lesser coin. Now, were you to give me the soul of a young virgin, then I could be extremely generous."**

"That *does* widen the field," Roger said thoughtfully. He looked at the butchered cat on the altar. The shadows cast by two flickering black candles made the scene even more repulsive. "It's hard enough for me to kill animals, but to kill a girl ..." He shuddered and shook his head. The demon sighed his regret. Seeing that Armas was genuinely disappointed, Roger decided it wouldn't hurt to explore the issue further. "If I did do such a thing," he asked slyly, "would you give me all the money I want? Enough to live like the playboy I'm meant to be?"

"Gladly," Armas exclaimed, licking his slobbering chops fiendishly. "I have not tasted a virgin's soul in such a long time. Your uncle's soul was bitter, as I am certain yours is."

Roger hotly stalked to the edge of the circle he'd chalked on the floor before the ritual and pointed a stern finger up at the demon. "Get rid of those thoughts, schmuck," he jeered. "No way are you sucking on my soul!"

Armas smiled his hideous smile and pointed down at the chalk line. "Like your uncle, you will grow careless and cross your circle of protection. And then—" He slammed his scaly palms together as though swatting an imaginary insect. "Both your ass *and* your soul are mine!" Armas' red eyes glowed with relish at the prospect.

Undaunted, Roger shook an angry fist at the demon. "Keep that shit up, fella, and no virgin soul for you!" Armas eyed him with a wounded expression. "Now get the hell out of here and let me think." He raised his scrawny arms and shouted, "Zambornah," the ancient magic word of dismissal, and the demon vanished in the midst of a huge cloud of fiery smoke, leaving behind a long-lingering sulphurous stench that assailed his nostrils. Roger hated it when he did that. Coughing, he waved the sickening smoke away from his face, removed his glasses and wiped his eyes, then scowled down at the dead cat. Damn, he detested cleaning up dead things.

For days, Roger pondered his dilemma. He needed his rich life now. His creditors were ready to storm his house and repossess all of his accumulated goodies. The thought of a virgin sacrifice became more appealing by the minute. But where to find her? He couldn't use a local girl. Everyone in this town knew him. And if he picked up a girl in another town, how did he know that she wasn't married and cheating on her husband?

Roger sighed despondently and stared out a picture window at the gathering twilight as his weary mind mulled over his options for the hundredth time that day. His track record at the singles bars was zip. It was risky, but he'd probably have to snatch some broad off the street. He mentally cursed that stingy, scummy demon Armas and his demands.

Then, as night settled in, he saw a lighted window in an isolated old house across the wide field from him. Inspiration, born of desperation, struck. Of

Art: Madman

course! Why hadn't he thought of it before? That bitchy woman writer. She was antisocial, so no one would miss her. Frothing inwardly, he remembered his attempt to cultivate Carla Kendall. After several unsuccessful attempts to meet her around town, he'd shown up on her doorstep one night, wearing gold chains and his best leisure suit, only to be rebuffed by the slender, beautiful young brunette.

"I'm sorry, Mr. Marsh," she had said cooly. "I'm working on a book and have no time to socialize. That's why I took this isolated house: for its privacy."

"C'mon, gorgeous, you've gotta have a little fun once in a while," he had responded, summoning his most devastating "suave man of the world" smile. "And I'm the guy for you."

"I write all night and sleep all day," she'd said, her large dark eyes flashing indignantly. "And I become very hostile if I'm disturbed." Then she'd slammed the door in his face.

That bitter memory still burning in his brain, Roger glared toward the lighted window and determinedly made up his mind to kill two birds with one stone. "Carla, baby," he crooned aloud, "you've had it!"

The long hike across the field only fueled Roger's rage. He crept up to the lighted window, wiped his sweat-fogged glasses, then peered in and saw the raven haired girl, clad in a short white nightgown and negligee, standing beside her desk with a cup of coffee while she read a page she'd evidently just taken out of her typewriter. Smirking to himself, he stole to the back door and did his cat imitation. He wasn't bad; he'd had enough practice luring cats for his sacrifices.

Soon he heard the light tapping of her high-heeled bedroom slippers and pressed back into the shadows beside the door. Nervous sweat was fogging his glasses, and his heart and lungs began a contest as to which could make the most noise. He tensed when the door opened and she stepped out.

"Here, kitty kitty?" she called.

Steeling himself, Roger lunged out of the shadows and rabbit punched her. She gave a low moan and crumpled at his feet. A feeling of self-satisfaction came over Roger as he stared down at her. This was the first time in his life he'd ever knocked anyone unconscious—and with only one blow! He gathered up his prize and, huffing and puffing, happily returned home.

For the ritual that night, Roger went all out and even wore his uncle's old robe with the magic symbols (something he rarely did, since it was much too large and gave him the appearance of a demented gnome). As he hastily thumbed through the thick book to the ritual for a human sacrifice, he heard the girl regain consciousness. He wished she hadn't; the ritual was hard enough to perform as it was. He reluctantly turned and looked down at her.

She lay tautly stretched upon the altar, her wrists and ankles bound with silken cords and held in place by separate cords connected to the ring bolts at either end of the altar.

Spread fanlike about her head, her long hair contrasted her ivory skin, which shone like alabaster in the candlelight. Her lovely face mirrored her bewilderment at her helplessness and strange surroundings. Then she saw him and intelligence and recognition flashed in her large dark eyes.

"You!" she cried.

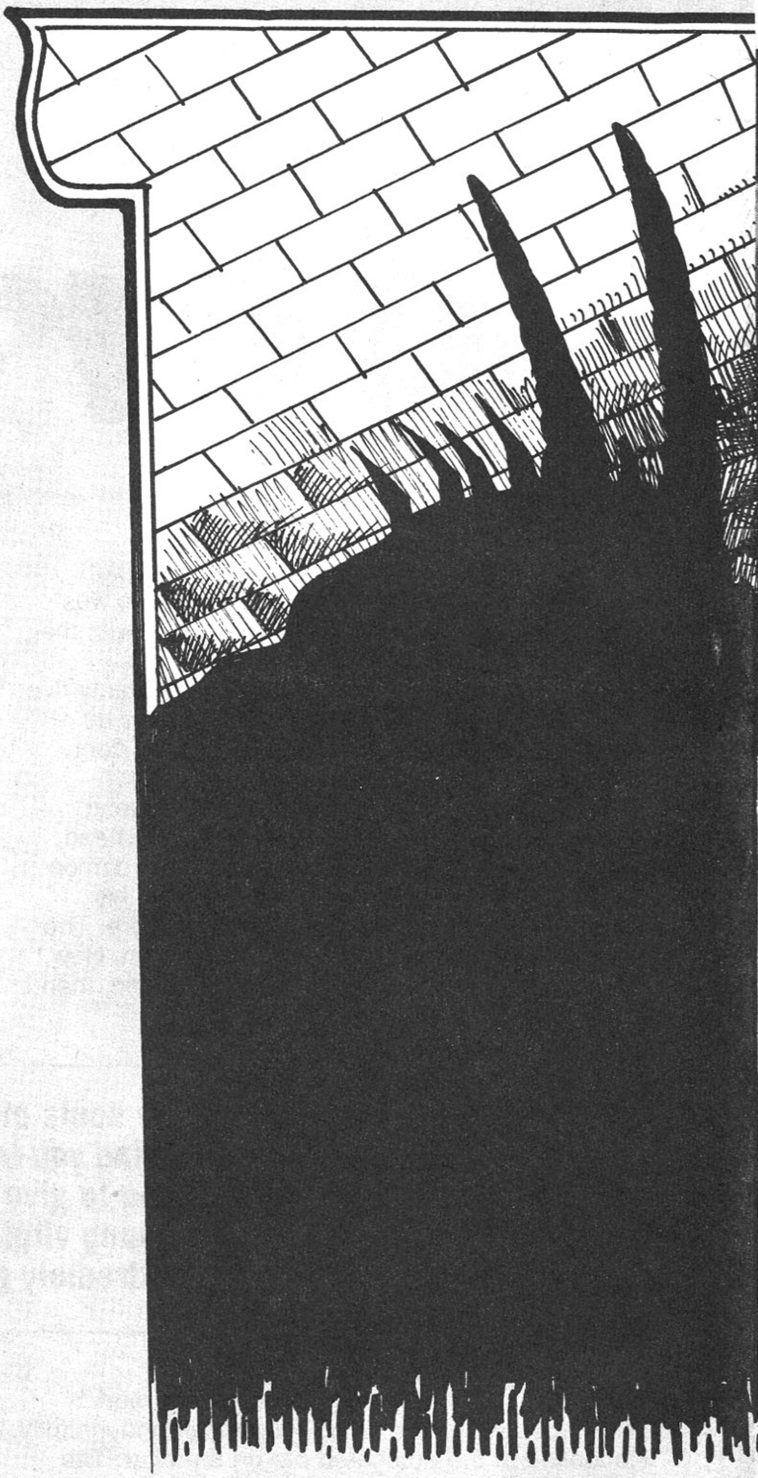
"Yes, me," Roger gloated, "Ms. High 'n' Mighty Writer."

"Untie me, you little worm," she demanded, writhing against her ropes, "or you're in big trouble."

Roger shook his head. "You're the one who's in big trouble, my virgin sacrifice."

She stopped squirming and gaped up at him in surprise. "I'm not a virgin!"

Roger smiled wickedly. "You're not married, and that makes you a virgin to Armas. Now shut up, I gotta concentrate." He ignored her sputtering protests and urgent struggles, and raced through the ancient incantation that would summon the demon Armas. Reaching the ultimate moment, his trembling hands raised the long gleaming knife above his head.



"No, please!" the girl gasped, her eyes wide and imploring.

Roger hesitated. Could he murder a beautiful, helpless girl for money?

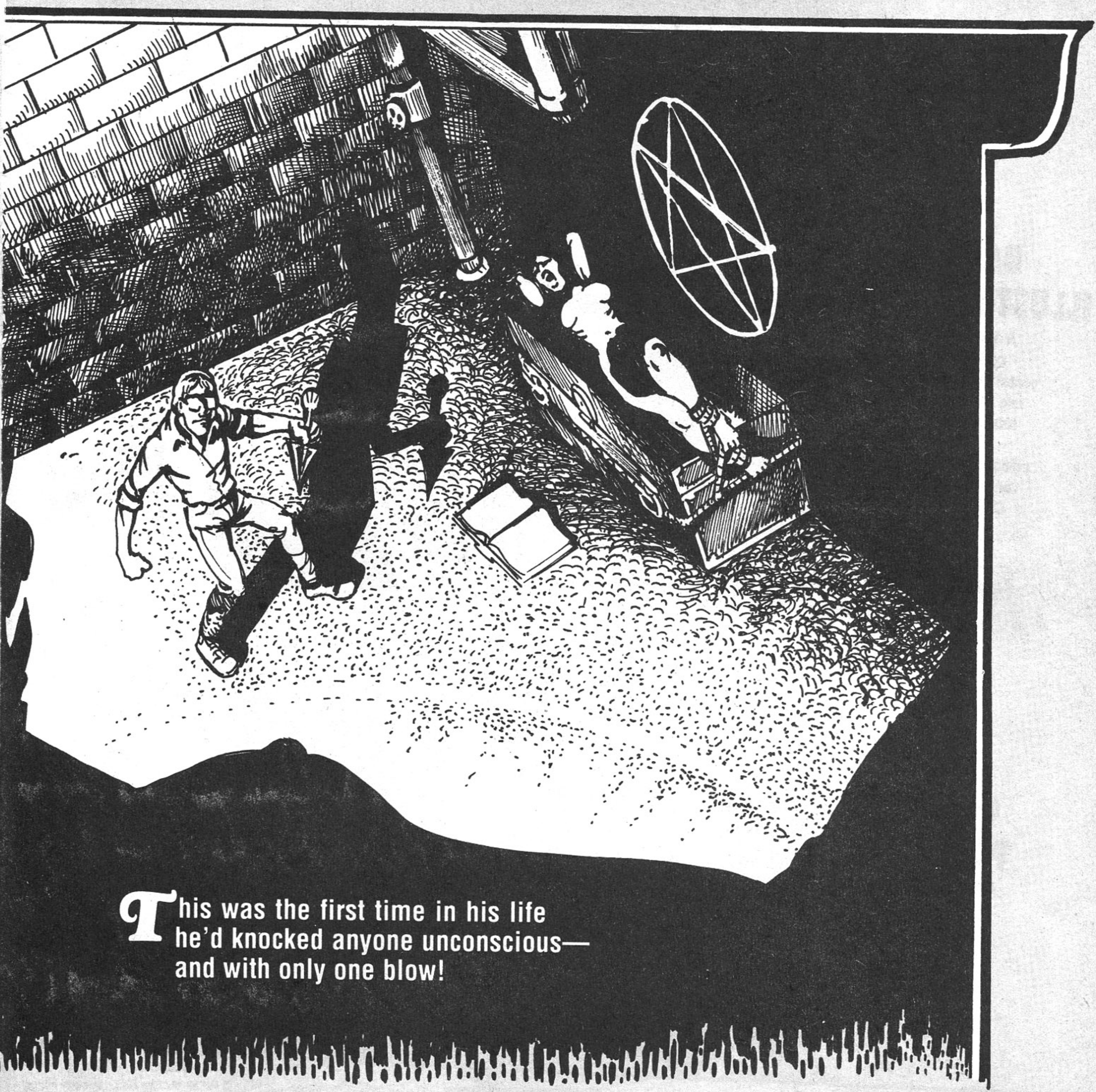
Greed won over compassion. He plunged the blade down into her heart.

Shocked by the enormity of his act, Roger was oblivious to the fiery smoke and sulphurous reek heralding the demon's appearance. But his remorse was fleeting. Dropping the bloody knife beside the dead girl, he looked up at Armas and anxiously demanded his reward.

The demon expelled his breath in a great oral sigh and sadly shook his ugly head. "Roger, you are a constant disappointment to me."

"What? You have your damn virgin sacrifice!"

The demon's red eyes rolled wearily beneath their hooded



This was the first time in his life he'd knocked anyone unconscious—and with only one blow!

lids. "But this one has no soul."

As Roger scowled in utter confusion, a female voice purred, "That's right, Roger dear." His head jerked around, almost sending his glasses flying from his nose. The girl was alive, smiling up at him. "You see, vampires have no soul," she said, baring newly sprouted fangs.

"B-but you said you were a *writer*," Roger stammered.

"Who's more qualified to write about vampires than a vampire?" She snapped the already frayed rope holding her bound wrists to the ring bolt and sat up. "I try not to bother the locals in this small town," she paused to sever the cord about her wrists with her sharp fangs, "but you're an exception." She quickly freed her ankles, then frowned down at her blood-stained negligee. "Damn, this was my favorite nightgown." She swung her legs over the side of the altar and stood. "Let's get this over with, you miserable little creep, so I can get back to my typewriter."

Roger turned to run, only to find that he'd already backed himself up to the edge of the chalk circle of protection. To cross it meant hideous death. Armas' slobbering face loomed above him.

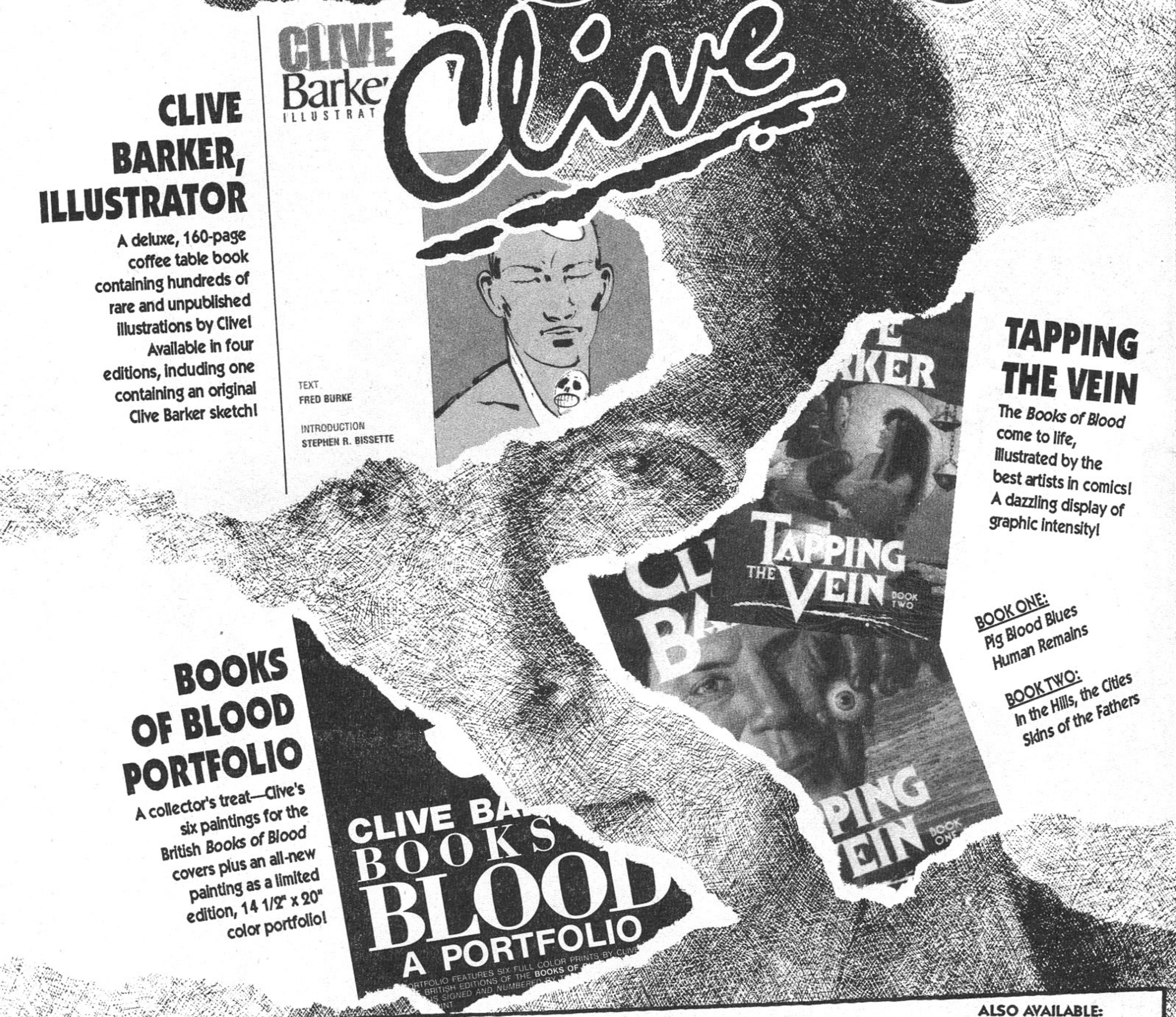
"I told you your time would come, Roger," Armas gloated triumphantly. "Not a virgin's soul, but it will have to do."

"No, stay and be mine, Roger dear," the vampire cooed seductively.

Roger stood pondering his horrible dilemma. He'd really blown it this time. He was doomed to damnation no matter what he did.

Then they were upon him, snarling and growling, this way and that, like two beasts of prey struggling over a piece of raw meat. Roger's pitiful scream hung in the night air, but there was no one to hear. At least, no one human.

THREE SLICES OF Clive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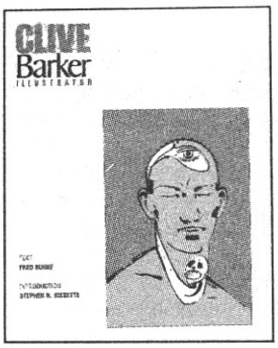

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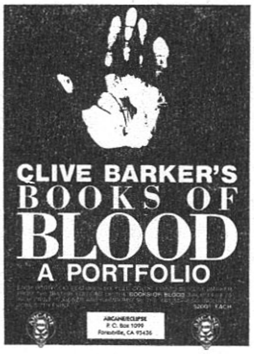

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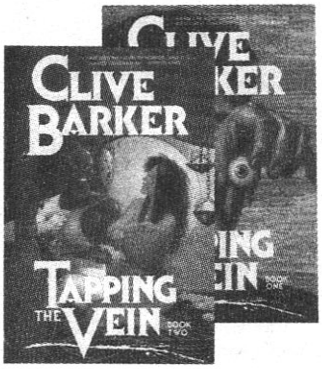

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PROFILE

By MAITLAND McDONAGH

The EVIL EYE of Dario Argento

Yeah, we're all licking our chops at the prospect of a new Argento/Romero collaboration.

It's pouring rain in Pittsburgh, and Dario Argento is almost lost behind the desk of his office at the Westin William Penn Hotel, production headquarters and home to the cast and crew of Two Evil Eyes. *Argento has just finished looking at dailies from a particularly gruesome day of shooting: the discovery of a bisected body a la "The Pit and the Pendulum."*

Though his macabre sensibilities and gaunt appearance lend credence to Argento's reputation as an eccentric—some say worse—the director is warm and eager to discuss his newest foray into the world of the baroque and the bizarre.

GOREZONE: In the past you've always directed original screenplays. Why did you decide to turn for inspiration to Edgar Allan Poe for *Two Evil Eyes?*

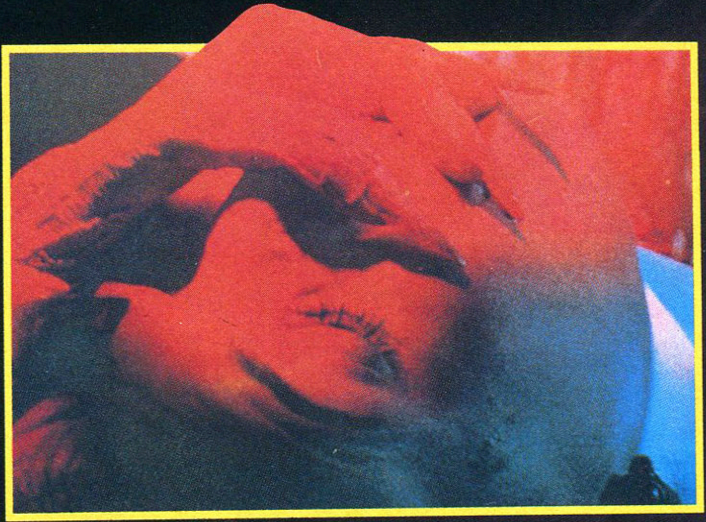
Dario Argento: I feel a great affinity with Poe; I understand his pain. I thought it was important to make a picture that would differ from the memory people have of the Corman Poe pictures, and all the other adaptations of Poe's work. We've made a picture that accurately represents the spirit of Poe's work, even though we changed many things in the specifics of the stories—both [George] Romero and I. I think it's true to Poe to set his stories in the present, because when Poe wrote he wrote about the present; he didn't set his stories in some safe, distant past. When he wrote "The Pit and the Pendulum," he was inspired by things that had happened within his lifetime, and early on I thought about taking that story and setting it in Chile, five or 10 years ago during the Pinochet regime. This is a perfectly valid approach to the story, which isn't abstract and philosophical, like some of his writing. It's very concrete and specific, and I felt it would translate very well

"'The Black Cat' deals with the psychology of someone who commits a crime and believes he can remain silent. But of course he's wrong ..."

into a completely specific, modern-day situation. I feel Poe would have understood the world today very well.

GZ: Rather than adapting the story of "The Black Cat" directly, you've used it as a starting point for a meditation on recurring themes and images in Poe.

Argento: Exactly. You can't look at my segment and call it "The Black Cat," not really, because it's "The Black Cat" and many other stories. I decided against "The Pit and the Pendulum" as my main text because it was so simple; I wanted something more baroque to be the basis of my picture. Ultimately, I can't even really tell you why "The Black Cat." There are many arguments that sound reasonable, but the truth is one day I was just thinking "The Black Cat."



Parts of *Inferno* were lensed in New York; for "The Black Cat," Argento picked the more hospitable Pittsburgh.

I held over the image of "The Pit and the Pendulum" because even though I had decided not to do the story, that picture stayed with me. "The Murders in the Rue Morgue" and "Berenice" are among my favorites, and I couldn't make a Poe movie without including them. I think all three stories are similar in a way, all about the way the mind is when it is very narrow in its focus. In "Pit and the Pendulum," there is nothing but fear; it's a man thinking and thinking, and the more he thinks the more fear breeds in his mind. In "Berenice," the man is obsessed with the teeth of a woman—this is incredible, so true! And in "Murders in the Rue Morgue," we read about a man who is always thinking about the way things fit together, a detective in the purest form. There are many other stories I love, and I made mention of them in whatever way I could.

I'm also concerned with the personal story of Edgar Allan Poe, and the way it's reflected in his stories. My central character, Rod Usher, is in many ways very similar to Poe himself.

GZ: In the way that he's haunted by his art, the way that it drives him insane?

Argento: That's right. He's also tormented by the question of morality. Is it right to be obsessed with looking at terrible things and sharing them with other people, especially when many people are perturbed by them?

The story of "The Black Cat" is similar in some ways to Dostoevski's *Crime and Punishment*, in that it deals with the psychology of someone who commits a crime and believes he can remain silent. But of course he's wrong, because a crime follows you, persecutes you. It's like something burrowed deep into your brain. I find the resemblance to Dostoevski remarkable—the obsessiveness, the glimpse into the darkness of the human soul.

GZ: You've also based the character in very specific terms on the American photographer...

Argento: Weegee, yes. I made Usher into a photographer, and Weegee was an inspiration. I like his work because his interest in humanity was a very strange one. He loved people when they were desperate or dead or drugged; he loved humanity in extreme and dire states. The pictures he took were very strong, and I believe completely in the power of the image.

For this reason, I also incorporated many pictures into the set design of the film. They add some more layers to what you see. I chose all the paintings you see in the movie. There's one painting of the wife of Edgar Allan Poe. No one will know that's who she is, but I had to put in this picture of a beautiful, dying woman. There's also a picture of [French writer] Baudelaire. Most people will see that picture and think he's just someone's grandfather, but no, it's Baudelaire, and it's important to me that he is there.

GZ: Although it's short, "The Black Cat" scenario allows for a number of the set pieces for which you've become known. It makes me think of *Tenebrae*.

Argento: Yes, like *Tenebrae*, the piece starts out in a very hard, naturalistic way, then there are moments that are truly delirious.

GZ: Do you know what people are going to say about this film? They're going to say, "Only Dario Argento could take the stories of Edgar Allan Poe and make a movie about murdering women in grisly ways."

Argento: Do you have a problem with that? I don't think so, and I don't, either. There are always people who do, but I don't care about them. Edgar Allan Poe had a terrible imagination. He drank, he took drugs, and he saw many horrible things in his mind. Nice people don't see such things. But he made them into stories we still read today, all over the world. In Europe, we discovered Poe through the translations of Baudelaire, who loved him and treated him as a major literary influence. Also through the surrealists, for whom he was very important. We have an image of him almost as an angel, as someone who suffered in pursuit of his visions.

GZ: What are the two evil eyes of the title?

Argento: Two evil views about Poe, maybe. Romero and I have talked about that, and he doesn't like the name very much. Maybe we'll change it by the time the picture is released.

GZ: I understand you worked very closely with the FX team on concocting horrific images, many of them drawn from classical

> "I love to work with animals ... They're difficult on the set, but so are all actors."

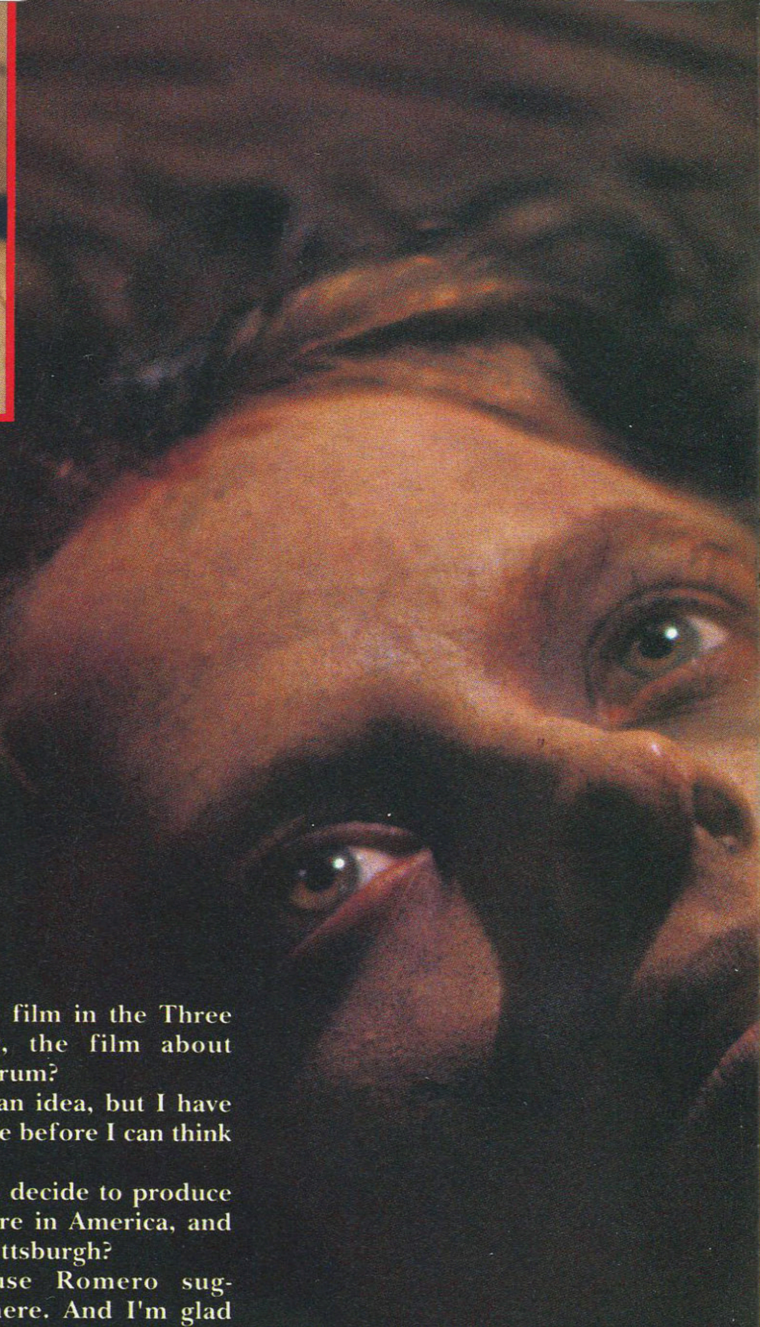
sources—sculpture, paintings, woodcuts—rather than from pathology textbooks.

Argento: It's true. before I began to write, I looked at hundreds of paintings and other works of art that related to the issues I wanted to deal with. For example, in my film, there's an image of women suspended on crosses. I studied many classical representations of crucifixion, and the thing that fascinated me is that the cross is a very holy im-

When Argento says bloodbath, he means it.

All Photos: Copyright Dacfilm

A night at the *Opera*. If Argento hadn't used the notoriously cursed *Macbeth*, you might have seen this film already.



age, an image of spirituality, and at the same time that it represents something terrible: horrible physical suffering and pain. The black cat itself has a great history in art, as a sign of the devil or of witches, or just an embodiment of evil. I studied many works, and I saw the black cat over and over again—beautiful, but evil.

There's also a dream sequence involving impalation. I have many pictures of this, mostly Turkish in origin—or Romanian; they learned from the Turks—that are very beautiful and ornate at the same time that they depict gruesome suffering. There's a vast tradition in the arts of combining the sublime and the grotesque, and for me that is interesting.

I am always interested in the look of things that have to do with death and decay. I love to visit catacombs and ossuaries and cemeteries—they are beautiful things. I'm going to be producing a picture about catacombs for a friend.

GZ: You've produced films for a number of your friends, most recently *The Church*, for Michele Soavi.

Argento: Yes, that's a very nice piece of work. It was just shown at the London Film Festival. It starts in the Middle Ages and concerns a church haunted by the devil. The church is a huge, Gothic church; I love the look of Gothic architecture, the vaults and the sculpture and the stained glass. It's like the Cathedral at Chartres, but it was built by an alchemist, and inside are hidden references to alchemy and the power it can bestow.

GZ: It sounds like one of the houses of the Three Mothers ...

Argento: But it's not. It's just a haunted church, and why shouldn't a church be one of the houses of the damned?

GZ: Are you still thinking about making the final film in the Three Mothers trilogy, the film about Mater Lachrymarum?

Argento: I have an idea, but I have to develop it more before I can think about making it.

GZ: Why did you decide to produce *Two Evil Eyes* here in America, and specifically in Pittsburgh?

Argento: Because Romero suggested coming here. And I'm glad he did. I like the locations, the people here have been wonderful to work with, and it's a change from the way I usually work. I love the look of the city, and you'll see it in the many locations we used for the film. They seem to be obsessed here by the Gothic building near Market Square that looks like a tremendous castle made out of glass. In the downtown area, there's a jail that looks medieval. It's incredible, scary, terrible looking.

I've loved Pittsburgh since the first time I saw it, which was when I came here many years ago to work on *Dawn of the Dead* with Romero. That was shooting in January, under terrible conditions, but the picture was wonderful when it was finished. He's a beautiful person, wonderful to work with, and I'm delighted we're able to do it again.

GZ: Wasn't it much more expensive to shoot here than in Italy?

Argento: Not really. Ultimately, the costs were similar. Partly that's because of the kind of picture this is—short and location-oriented, not with many very elaborate sets that have to be built. For me to take a picture like *Opera* here, that would be very, very expensive, but not this one.

GZ: The majority of your crew is American. Has that posed any special difficulties for you?

Argento: Not really. The language is sometimes a problem, but it's only one problem among all the others you always have when you make a picture. There's trouble with the special effects, something in the story doesn't work, the weather isn't cooperating ... what's one more thing on top of all the others? It's been an adventure, but mostly it's been a learning experience. With movies, you can never know enough, and every picture, every crew, teaches you some new things.

On *Opera*, I had a lot of English crew members and learned many things from them. Overall, though, that was a terrible experience. You know, many cuts were made after I was finished, even though I protested.

GZ: I understand that part of the inspiration for *Opera* was that you were actually supposed to direct an opera on stage.

Argento: Yes, but that didn't work out. The opera we used in the film was *Macbeth*, which has a tradition in the theater of bringing people bad luck. People all warned against using it, suggested using *La Traviata* or *La Boheme*, and I said, "This is just a story, don't be foolish," but maybe they were right. Many things happened. Vanessa Redgrave was scheduled to be in the film, and she pulled out. One of the actors was crushed by a car. I was engaged to be married, but by the end of the picture that was finished. My father died during the shooting... all kinds of things. But I felt I had started with *Macbeth*, so I had to finish. And anyway, there are no ravens in *Cosi Fan Tutti*.

GZ: *Opera* still hasn't been released in the United States, and it doesn't look as though it will be anytime soon.

Argento: I know. It's a terrible thing. Some people have told me the end is too sad for American audiences, but I love it. Although the production is very rich and elaborate, *Opera* tells a very simple story, and I think the ending is correct, so I wish audiences in America could see it.

One good thing recently is that *Suspiria* has just been released here on videocassette, in a very complete version, letterboxed to preserve the frame. That took almost 10 years, so if *Opera* comes to video in a year or two, or even three, I'll be happy. If something is worth seeing, it won't hurt that people can't see it immediately.

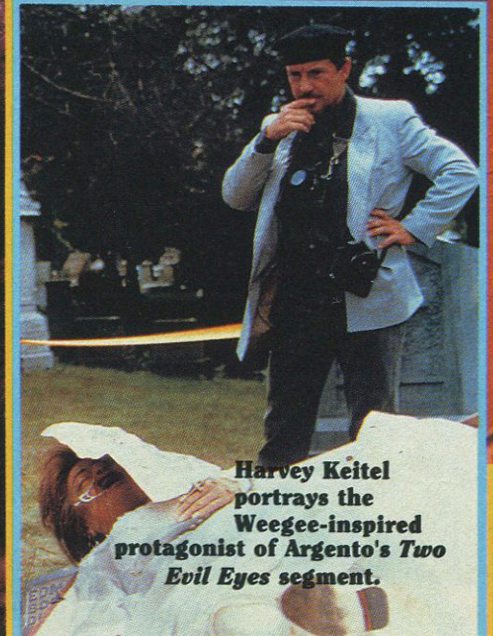
GZ: Your last few films have been crawling with animals: Insects and the chimpanzee in *Phenomena*, ravens in *Opera*, the black cat in *Two Evil Eyes*. Does this mean something?

Argento: I love to work with animals; their souls are very special. They're difficult on the set, but so are all actors.

I have two black cats of my own—Dic and Lieb; they're father

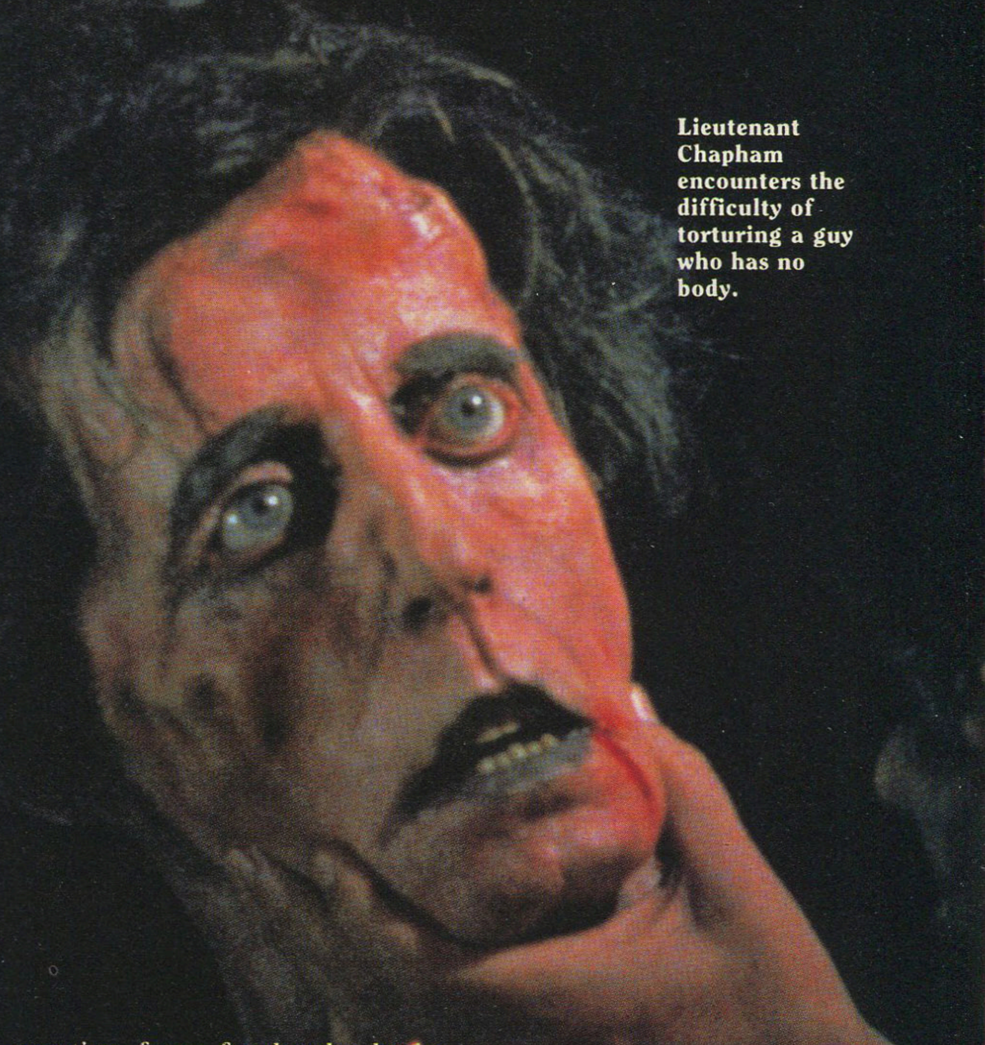
(continued on page 64)

Check behind the basement walls *before* you buy the house.



Harvey Keitel portrays the Weegee-inspired protagonist of Argento's *Two Evil Eyes* segment.

Would You Buy a USED HE



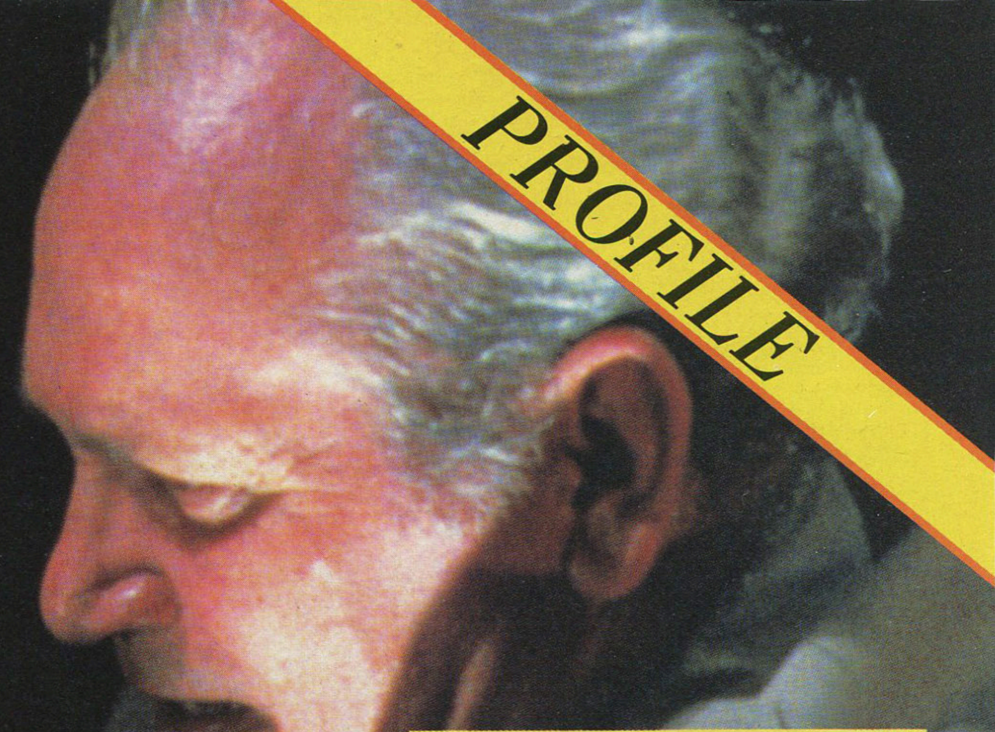
Lieutenant Chapham encounters the difficulty of torturing a guy who has no body.

It's always gratifying when a real fan makes good, and it's even better when "good" becomes "great." Faced with a business that is more often than not greedy, manipulative, cynical and product-oriented, we naturally welcome news that one of our own is in the driver's seat, calling the shots. Such success helps reinforce our own hopes and dreams, and shows us that the path from fan to filmmaker is not an impossible one. This fan has not only made good, but he made *Re-Animator*, too. Meet Brian Yuzna, True Believer.

"A fan? Absolutely. Always been," vows Yuzna, during one of our many conversations on the sets of his two current projects, *Society* and *Bride of Re-Animator*. "Big-time fan as a kid, too. I had all the *Famous Monsters* magazines. I love horror movies. I never quit learning from them."

Born in the Philippines, Yuzna grew up in Nicaragua and Panama and later attended schools in both Georgia and North Carolina, where he continued to indulge his passion for filmmaking. His job skills from those days reflect his rather eclectic upbringing: He sold pumpkins in October, Christmas trees in December, studied religion and art in college, sold real estate, did carpentry, and marketed his abstract paintings in various area galleries. Just your standard credentials for a nouveau splatter auteur? Nothing typical about this guy. Let's not forget what his idea of a "good time" has been in the past: a lascivious severed head taking untold liberties with a bound, spread-eagled, naked ingenue; snakelike pineal glands erupting from foreheads; brains sucked out through eye sockets; heads popping from poop chutes; high brow party types licking slime off a 25-foot undulating, purple-veined thing that barfs buckets of grue on cue. "I hate movies that don't go far enough," Yuzna understates. "I like to be outrageous." No shit.

In his teens, Yuzna began shooting little backyard epics in Super 8, relying on a heavy-duty slate of kitchen sink-style FX coupled with stop-motion animation. It wasn't until he discovered a 16mm Bolex camera, lent him by a friend, that the filmmaking bug bit really deep and held tight. Also during this period, Yuzna met up with Mike Muscal, another enthusiastic film student who shared Yuzna's excitement. They both began their filmmaking careers in earnest. Muscal has gone



By CHAS. BALUN

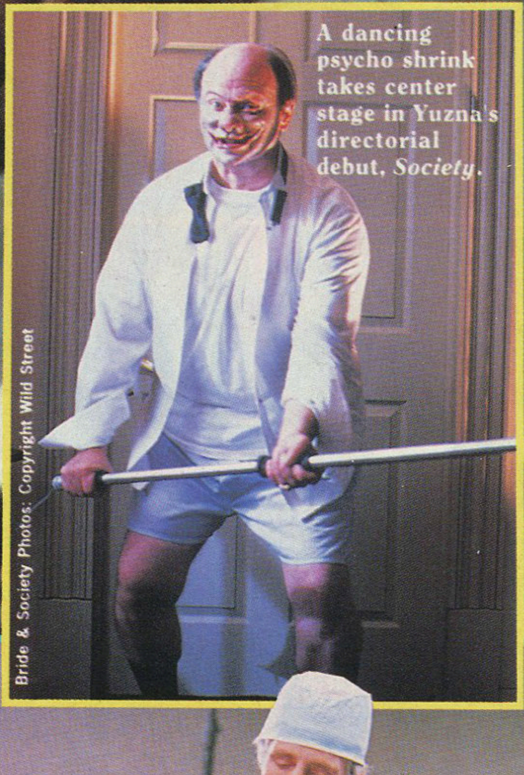
AD From This Man?

"I hate movies that don't go far enough. I like to be outrageous."

on to serve as a top-notch FX coordinator on such films as *Robot Jox* and *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*, as well as working with Yuzna in various capacities on nearly all his films.

A short time later, Yuzna decided to "change my scene, move to LA and make movies." He worked on such varied fare as an Amos 'n' Andy TV special and an 80-hour compilation of *The Golden Years of Television* before another friend, Bob Greenberg, introduced him to Stuart Gordon. (Greenberg later served as an associate producer on *Re-Animator* and was then tragically killed by a drunk driver. Gordon's *Robot Jox* is dedicated to his memory.) "Gordon was a good bet," Yuzna remembers. "He had directed lots of plays and knew how to deliver with actors." They both wanted to do a film, but only something that hadn't been done before. "We were crazed, serious horror fans," Yuzna enthuses. "Stuart had a TV script—a 50 page treatment, anyway—on *Re-Animator*."

The chemistry was perfect. "I knew carrying heads around was



A dancing psycho shrink takes center stage in Yuzna's directorial debut, *Society*.

Bride & Society Photos: Copyright Wild Street

Remember how David Gale looked intact?

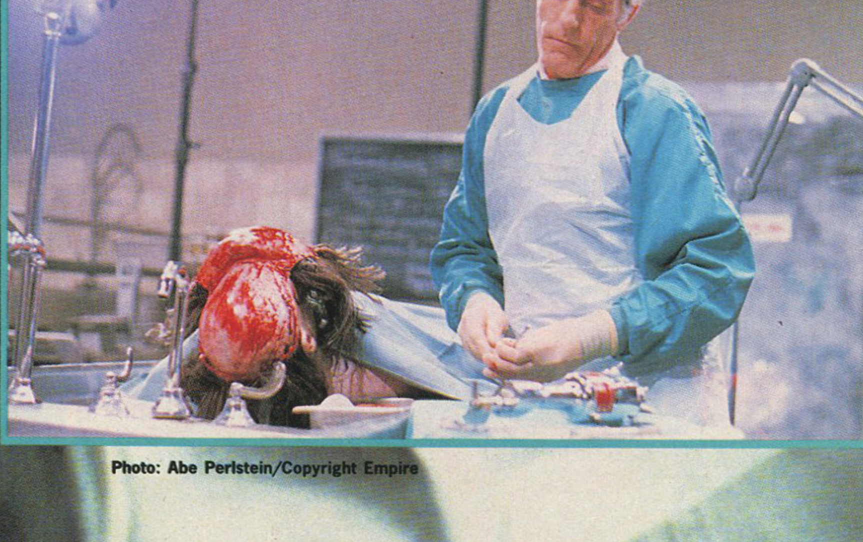


Photo: Abe Perlstein/Copyright Empire

> "With *Bride of Re-Animator*, it is *very* important to me that we don't disappoint the fans."

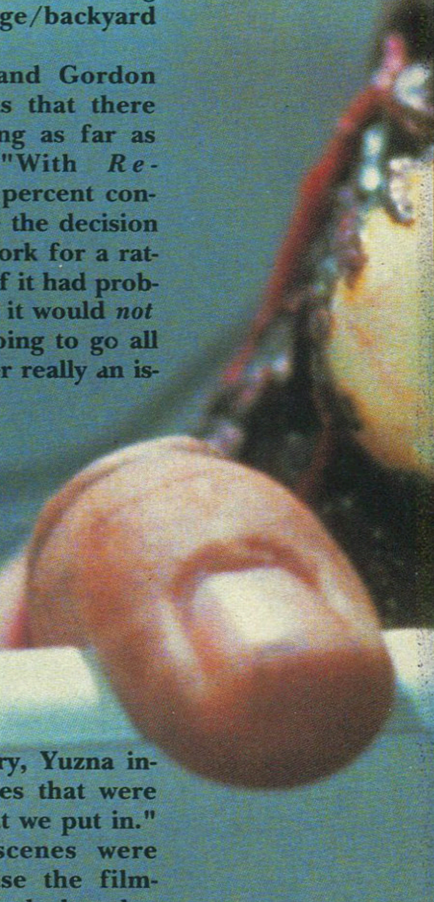
one of my favorite things," Yuzna reasons, "so I took all my money, borrowed some from friends and made my own movie." The rest is splatter history. Though *Re-Animator* was released under the dreaded Empire banner, Yuzna quickly points out that Charles Band had little, if anything, to do with the finished product. (Thank God for small favors.) "He's taken a lot of credit, but he did nothing, didn't put a nickel in it," the producer clarifies. "He read the script, that's about all."

During *Re-Animator*'s formative stages, Gordon moved out to Los Angeles and preproduction began. "Stuart was living at my house." Yuzna smiles. "The whole thing began as a real garage/backyard kind of thing."

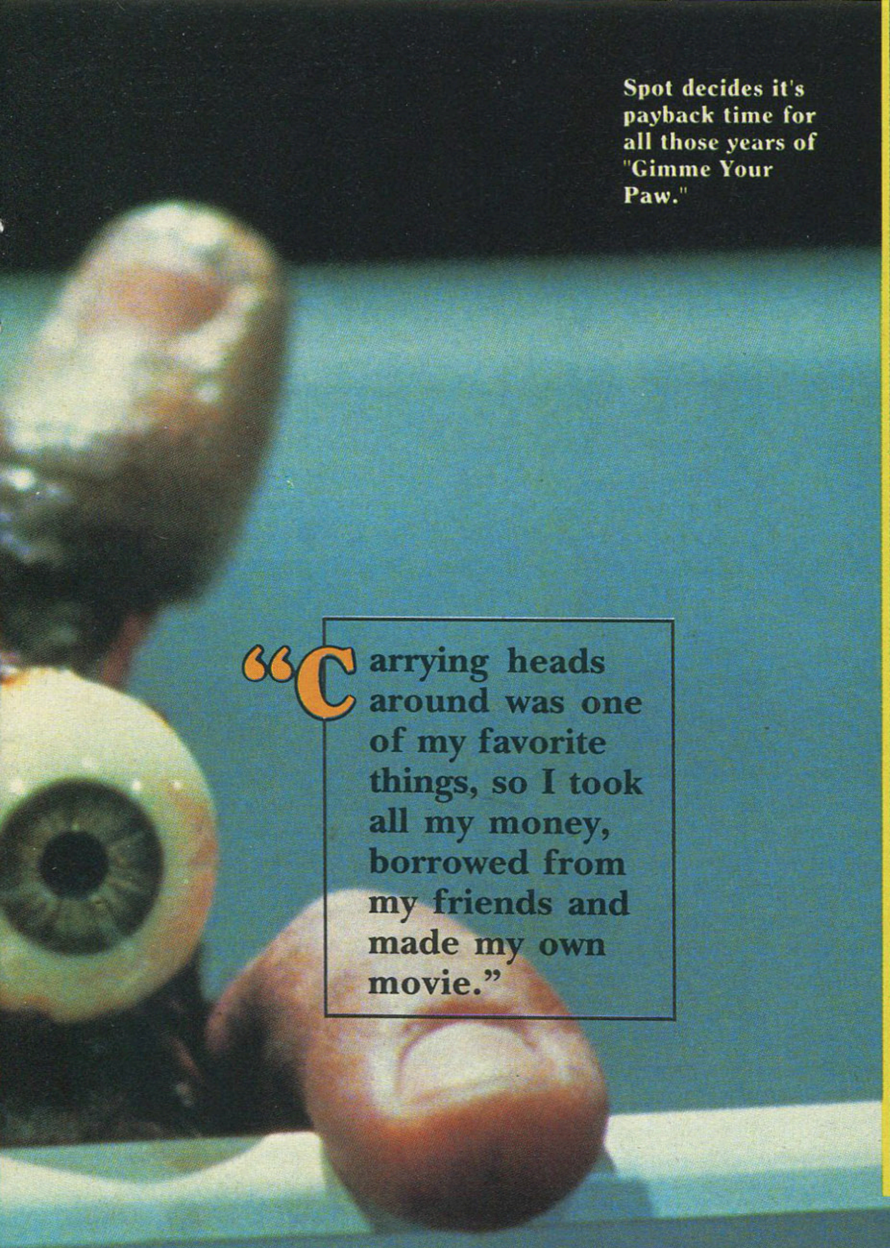
One thing Yuzna and Gordon both agreed upon was that there would be no ass-kissing as far as the MPAA went. "With *Re-Animator*, we had 100 percent control. I personally made the decision that I didn't want to work for a rating," Yuzna affirms. "If it had problems, the one problem it would *not* have was that it was going to go all the way. That was never really an issue. It wasn't going to fail for lack of nerve."

Despite being released unrated in all its guts and glory, Yuzna insists, "We had outtakes that were *much* more X than what we put in." Eventually, several scenes were shortened, not because the filmmakers got weak-kneed, but because preview audiences responded unfavorably to them. Segments which were affected included the autopsy scene where Dr. Hill first exposes the brain, several incidents of full-on nudity, the infamous "head" sequence, and other material alluding to Herbert West's burgeoning substance-abuse problem. "We cut it back and

Bad enough this thing slimes your carpet, but it leaves your house reeking of cigar smoke, too.



Spot decides it's payback time for all those years of "Gimme Your Paw."



> "Carrying heads around was one of my favorite things, so I took all my money, borrowed from my friends and made my own movie."

pulled out a lot of explicit stuff," Yuzna explains. "With the head giving head, well, we had plenty more. When Hill sticks his tongue in her ear, people screamed. When he kisses her breast, they got really scared. But we let it go on too long and it quit being fun for the preview audiences." Yuzna adds, "I tend to get a little too *explicit* sometimes."

The producer displays unnecessary modesty when assessing the merits of a film most genre wags have already christened a modern classic. Get this, willya? "I feel real lucky," Yuzna shrugs. "I understand what a crapshoot filmmaking is. Beginner's luck, you might say. We were fortunate."

Although proud of their final cut, Yuzna was clearly not amused by either the R-rated version of *Re-Animator* or the TV print screened on local stations. "I'm very touchy about cutting," he bristles. "I was out of the country when they cut the film. Empire just had some second-rate editor do it."

The critical and popular success of *Re-Animator* led to further collaborations with both director Gordon and screenwriter Dennis Paoli, who also scripted *From Beyond*, *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* and *Pit and the Pendulum*. *From Beyond*, part of a three-picture Italian deal with Empire Pictures, proved far more problematic than its predecessor. Both Yuzna and Gordon have concurred that perhaps the story would have been better served by a slightly less ambitious approach. "I loved the pineal gland idea. It's a premise that stands on its own," he divulges. "But it doesn't hold together as well as *Re-Animator*. However, it's a nice blend of sci-fi and horror." He reminds your reporter that, in fact, Lovecraft's original story was only a few pages long. "We had such an open end to invent things that Lovecraft may have met in this terrible new reality he'd discovered. He found it could not only be bad and ugly, but that it could get to you."

A slight difference of opinion arose between Yuzna and Gordon during the filming of some of the film's more elaborate FX sequences. "Stuart is against doing anything you couldn't do on stage. As far as I'm concerned, every gimmick is worth pursuing. I really enjoy the fantasy stuff," Yuzna

Photo: Courtesy Tom Rainone

If more sequels like *Bride of Re-Animator* are on the way, we can all take heart.

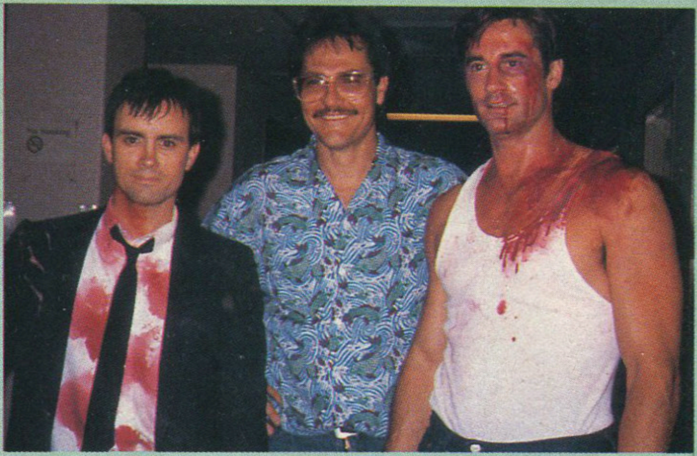


Photo: Courtesy Tom Rainone

The boys are back in town! Producer-cum-director Brian Yuzna compares stains with two of his favorite med students.

remarks, before offering an observation shared by many who've experienced the film. "It's so unlike *anything* I've ever seen," he says. Amen, bro.

Dolls, on the other hand, was created as "a good horror film for the whole family," Yuzna asserts. "It was never conceived as being in the mode of *Re-Animator* or *From Beyond*. We wanted it much gentler. It was meant to be a fairy tale, like 'Hansel and Gretel.'" Despite the rather tepid box office reaction to this fanciful parable, Yuzna remains delighted that he made a film that both Jason and Conan could really sink their teeth into. (Those are his kids, mate, and the ol' man reports, "They really like the movie.")

Dolls proved to be the last Yuzna/Gordon collaboration to reach fruition. Although a plethora of intriguing titles like *Gris-Gris*, *Lurking Fear* and *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* were soon announced, none progressed past the preproduction stage. *Lurking Fear*, another Lovecraft adaptation, was flirted with briefly but not seriously by Empire Pictures. "At that time, Charlie Band was selling stuff that never got made," Yuzna observes. *Gris-Gris* was bought out by Disney but soon abandoned in the wake of other voodoo-based pictures like *Angel Heart* and *The Serpent and the Rainbow*.

Probably the greatest disappointment, though, was what became of their plans to film Lovecraft's epic tale of madness and mutation, *The Shadow Over Innsmouth* (Fango #91). The film was once again to unite the splatter dream team of Yuzna (producer), Gordon (director) and Paoli (screenwriter) as well as featuring creature designs by illustrator in excelsius Berni Wrightson and special makeup FX supervised by the legendary Dick Smith. Too good to be true? You bet.

Vestron was slated to produce the film but balked repeatedly when the proposed budget was nearly doubled in order to accommodate an ambitious array of man-into-mutant metamorphoses. The budget wasn't the only roadblock. Both Yuzna and Gordon also found most people had a tough time relating to amphibious anomalies. "Yeah, a big problem here," Yuzna sighs. "Nobody understood it. When you say 'fish,' well ... there's nothing scary about fish."

Things fared no better with their proposed kid's fantasy *Teenie Weenies* after Disney became involved and the title changed to *Honey, I Shrunk the Kids*. "It was a bittersweet, difficult experience," Yuzna recalls. "It was an idea I'd thought of in grammar school, and since Stuart and I are both family men with lots of kids, we thought it would be great to do a picture our children could see."

Preproduction lasted just over a year and a half; sets had been built, the movie cast, and Yuzna had moved his family down to the Mexico location when the dung hit the rotor blades. "It was a strained, high-pressure situation at Disney. They were tough, they just pushed it and *pushed* it," Yuzna laments. Just days before shooting was to commence, director Gordon fell ill. "Stuart got real sick, just from all the pressure, and then his doctor stepped in." And then they were both history. Production had to be halted, and Gordon was replaced as director. An amicable parting? "Oh, no, of course not," Yuzna admits. "My name was above the title when I left. It was a bad experience, but it gave me confidence in my own ideas." (Yuzna still retains screen credit for both original story and for co-producing the final film.)

Fed up with studio politics, Yuzna soon struck a deal with Wild Street Pictures, a fledgling independent production company that allowed him a shot at producing and directing his own films. He started by directing *Society*, (Fango # 87), a slime-sucking spectacle starring a bizarre, sexually-active monstrosity even weirder than the Pretorious creature featured in *From Beyond*. "I can see my own inexperience and a little bit of naivete there," he confesses. "But I love it because it's original. We weren't aping anything. It's a very nontraditional monster." (Your reporter concurs, having spent a good seven or eight hours licking the beast during an hellacious party scene in the film.) *Society* has already appeared at several overseas film festivals and has received some fairly rabid rave-ups from our blood brethren in the United Kingdom.

With Yuzna's next project, the

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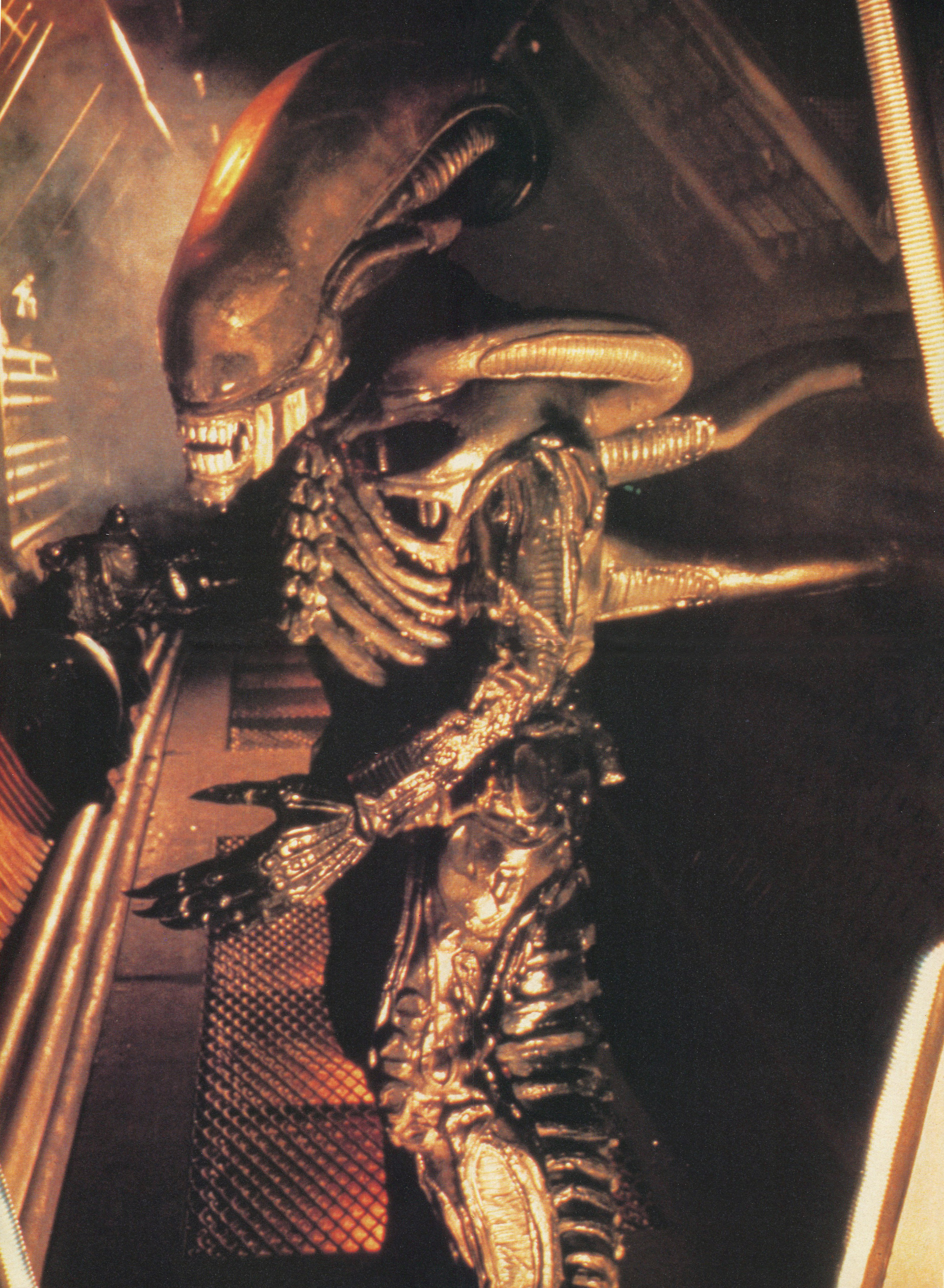

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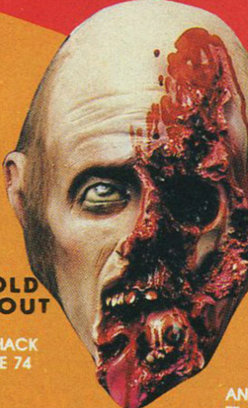
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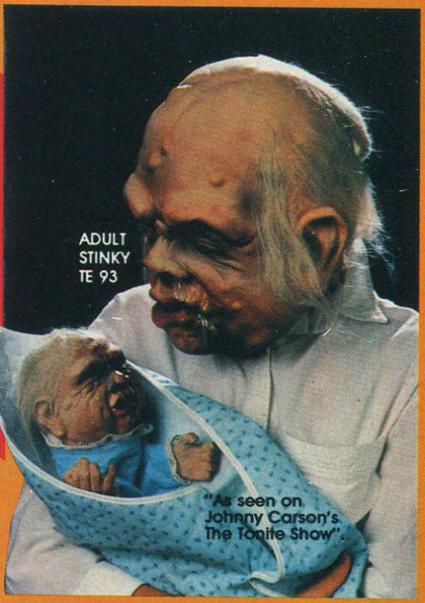

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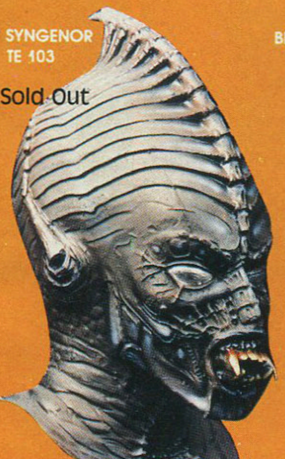
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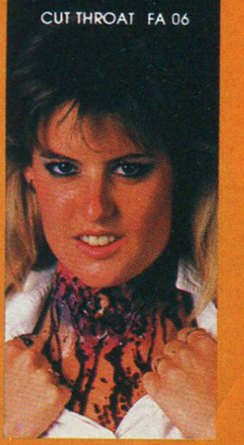
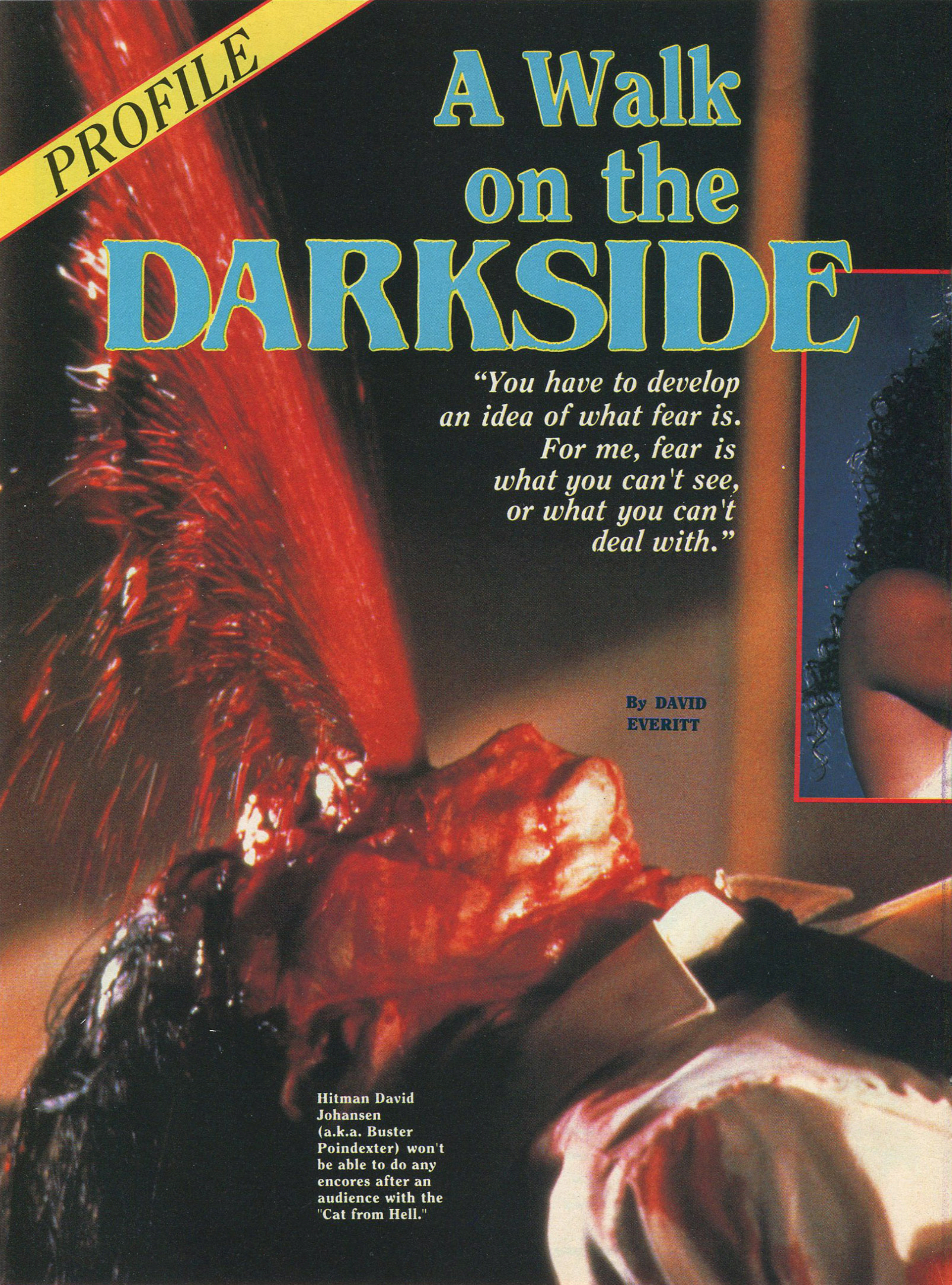


PROFILE

A Walk on the DARKSIDE

"You have to develop an idea of what fear is. For me, fear is what you can't see, or what you can't deal with."

By DAVID EVERITT



Hitman David Johansen (a.k.a. Buster Poindexter) won't be able to do any encores after an audience with the "Cat from Hell."

"Hmmm," ponders director John Harrison, "how much of this stuff can I get away with before the MPAA slaps my wrist?"

A "Lover's Vow" gets under Rae Dawn Chong's skin.

Tales Photos: Demmie Todd/Copyright 1990 Paramount Pictures

John Harrison describes himself as a man intrigued by the dark side of life. "It's a side of us that definitely exists. It really can't be denied," the director argues. "I also think it's worth exploring in order to try to understand it. Just walking down the street, I like to imagine what goes on around me—not the ordinary things, but the stuff somewhere under the surface."

Harrison's fascination with life's ominous aspects is given to expression in the current movie version of *Tales from the Darkside.* This is the first feature film Harrison has directed, but his interest in macabre material of this variety has been brewing for years. When he was a kid growing up in Pittsburgh, his taste for foreboding fiction developed from watching not only horror films but suspense thrillers and film noir as well, and more recently he has built a career exploring life's nightscape on film as an independent producer, a film scorist, an actor, an assistant director, often under the unofficial tutelage of George Romero. An anthology of three stories, each probing the world of the unnatural in its own way, would seem a fitting directing vehicle for someone with Harrison's experience and perspective, and that's exactly what *Tales from the Darkside: The Movie* is.

The *Darkside* stories were conceived by people who know something about weird tales. Most of the script was written by Michael McDowell, prolific horror novelist and one of the screenwriters on *Beetlejuice.* For *Darkside*, he scripted one of his own stories and adapted one by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle, while George Romero scripted the third tale, an adaptation of a Stephen King story. Putting these on films was a fairly smooth operation, Harrison reports, but as he talks about the shoot, it's clear he's pleased to have it behind him. While *Tales from the Darkside* was not a poverty row production by any means, it was still a tightly scheduled, no-frills filming, and in any case, all shoots are high-pressure experiences to one extent or another.

As his film editor puts together a rough assembly of the picture in Los Angeles, Harrison has some time to tend to other matters on the East Coast that have nothing to do with making movies. In between christening his newborn baby and visiting his parents, he finds time to talk about his career and his first feature-directing assignment.

For those who have followed horror films closely, and Romero films in particular, Harrison's face should be familiar. Well...not exactly. As an actor, he played Sir Pellinore in Romero's *Knightriders,* a fairly normal part, but his other screen appearances have usually been more villainous and more heavily disguised. In *Dawn of the Dead*, he played one of the grayskinned cannibal zombies, and in the more recent thriller *Jack's Back*, he turned up as a combination porn dealer/gun seller, and was just barely recognizable beneath the oily hair, sprouting whiskers and belligerent scowl. As it turns out, when he isn't zombified or sleazed up, Harrison looks quite a bit like Dan Aykroyd.

When talking about those experiences that originally inspired him to pursue a life in the movies, he recalls being taken to a stage performance at the American Conservatory Theater in Pittsburgh at age 14. "It just blew me out of the chair. I said to myself, 'This is what I want to do.'" Harrison has never had much involvement in legitimate theater, but the excitement that this play generated was translated into a desire to create a similar effect through other media. Movies had already been an interest of his;

Forget Blondie. Debbie Harry might have a new career ahead of her as a human pincushion.

it was that form that he turned to, especially a certain kind of movie form.

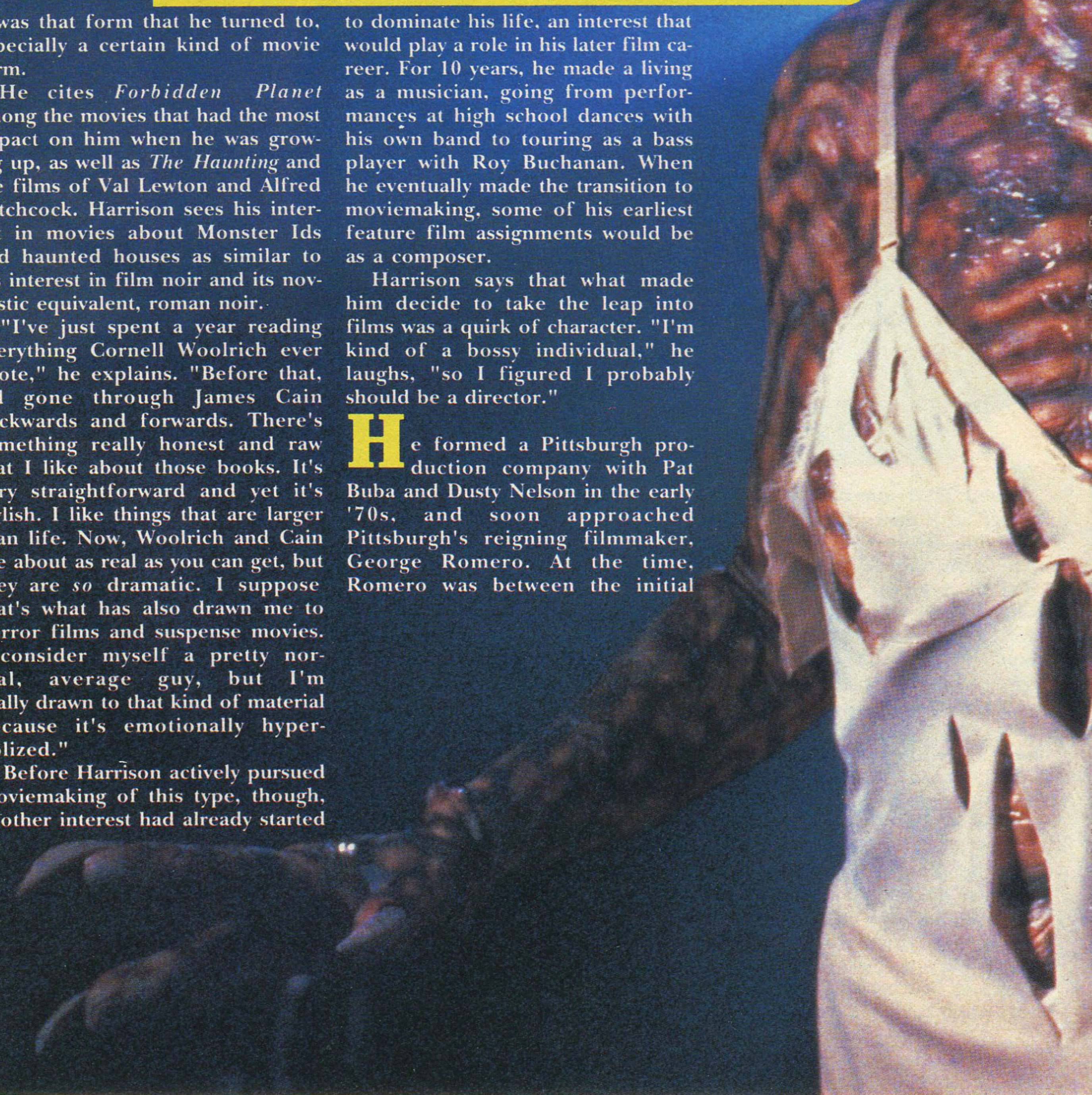
He cites *Forbidden Planet* among the movies that had the most impact on him when he was growing up, as well as *The Haunting* and the films of Val Lewton and Alfred Hitchcock. Harrison sees his interest in movies about Monster Ids and haunted houses as similar to his interest in film noir and its novelistic equivalent, roman noir.

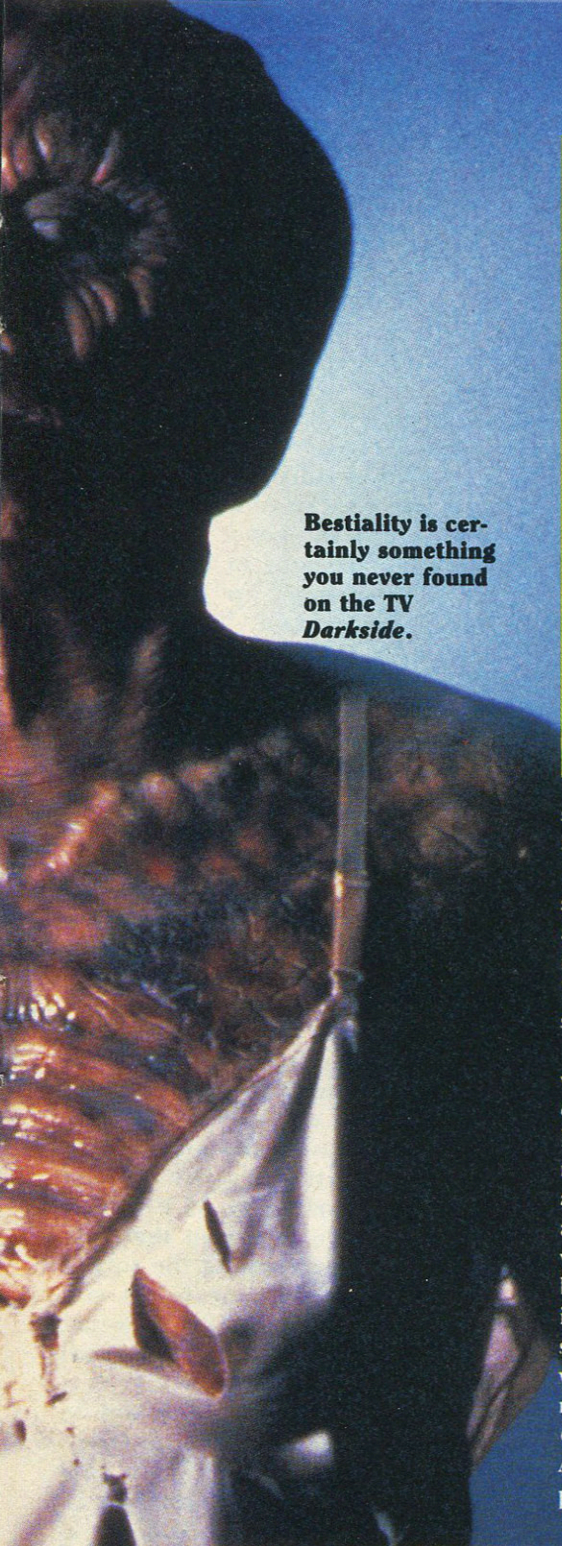
"I've just spent a year reading everything Cornell Woolrich ever wrote," he explains. "Before that, I'd gone through James Cain backwards and forwards. There's something really honest and raw that I like about those books. It's very straightforward and yet it's stylish. I like things that are larger than life. Now, Woolrich and Cain are about as real as you can get, but they are *so* dramatic. I suppose that's what has also drawn me to horror films and suspense movies. I consider myself a pretty normal, average guy, but I'm really drawn to that kind of material because it's emotionally hyperbolized."

Before Harrison actively pursued moviemaking of this type, though, another interest had already started to dominate his life, an interest that would play a role in his later film career. For 10 years, he made a living as a musician, going from performances at high school dances with his own band to touring as a bass player with Roy Buchanan. When he eventually made the transition to moviemaking, some of his earliest feature film assignments would be as a composer.

Harrison says that what made him decide to take the leap into films was a quirk of character. "I'm kind of a bossy individual," he laughs, "so I figured I probably should be a director."

He formed a Pittsburgh production company with Pat Buba and Dusty Nelson in the early '70s, and soon approached Pittsburgh's reigning filmmaker, George Romero. At the time, Romero was between the initial





Bestiality is certainly something you never found on the TV *Darkside*.

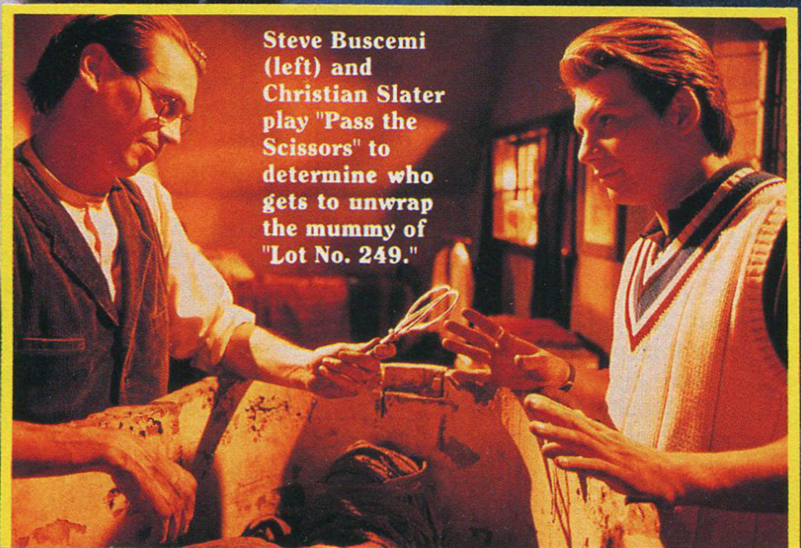
success of *Night of the Living Dead* and his follow-up hit *Dawn of the Dead*; he was making a living by shooting sports documentaries, and invited Harrison and his partners to help out. As a result, Harrison forged a crucial professional friendship.

Over the years, Harrison has worked with Romero on a number of films. When he appeared in Romero's *Dawn of the Dead*, he may not have established himself as a recognizable face, but he did make an impression as far as gorehounds were concerned. He was the zombie who got a screwdriver rammed into his ear. Talk about making a statement in your first role. He then went on to serve as an assistant director and music composer for *Creepshow* and *Day of the Dead*. Alternating between acting, composing and assistant-directing, Harrison received a thorough training in the filmmaking craft and a practical understanding of what did and did not work in horror thrillers. The importance of knowing a movie from the inside out was reinforced by the example set by Harrison's mentor.

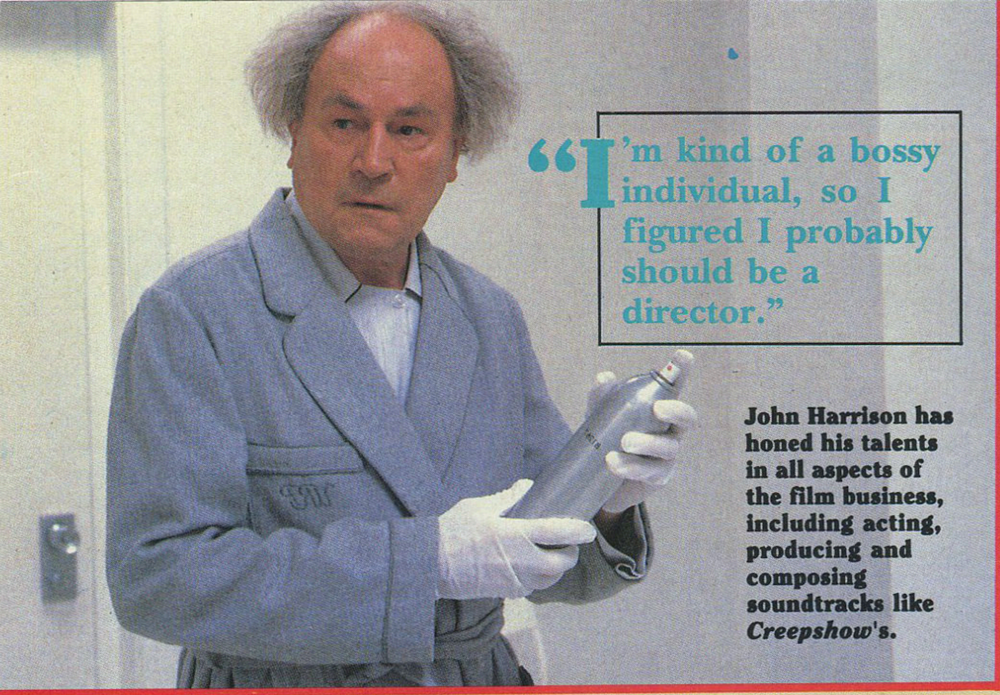
"George is a director, he's an editor, he's a cinematographer, he's a writer—these are all practical skills he's mastered," Harrison points out. "He's not a composer, nor is he a musician, but even there he has a great intuitive feel for producing film music. When he didn't have any money for original scores, he would have to use library material. And he could take those library tracks and create an entire new score—cutting a measure here and marrying it to a measure or suite of something else, and it would all modulate into a whole new key. What I learned from George is a real keen sense of all the different elements in the making of a movie and the importance of being on top of them all."

Harrison put some of this education to use in a 1979 feature titled *Effects*, a low-budget film shot in Pittsburgh with his partners Dusty Nelson and Pat Buba. Based on a novel called *Snuff*, it is an extremely dark story about a horror movie producer named Lacey Bickel who manipulates his cast and crew in Machiavellian ways. While shooting the movie at his estate, he subtly engineers some real violence among the members of the production and secretly videotapes the results. Harrison served as a producer and composer on *Effects* and also played the pivotal role of Lacey Bickel. Unfortunately, the film was never released in theaters or on video.

Harrison believes the problem may have been the movie's moody, cerebral quality didn't fit the much more simple standards of slasher movies that were hitting their stride at the time. Whatever the reason, the film's lack of exposure is a shame. *Effects* is an intense excursion into the unsettling side of human nature that deserves



Steve Buscemi (left) and Christian Slater play "Pass the Scissors" to determine who gets to unwrap the mummy of "Lot No. 249."



John Harrison has honed his talents in all aspects of the film business, including acting, producing and composing soundtracks like *Creepshow*'s.

Photo: Richard Golomb/Copyright 1981 Laurel

> "I'm kind of a bossy individual, so I figured I probably should be a director."

to be seen, and Harrison's performance as Bickel is a great example of insidious derangement.

Moving on from this disappointment, Harrison got his first chance to direct on some rock videos, then returned to the thriller format when Laurel Entertainment's *Tales from the Darkside* TV show began production. He directed some 10 episodes of that series, including the hallmarks "I'll Give You a Million" and "Everybody Needs a Little Love." From there, he went on to put his flair for dark entertainment to use on Laurel's *Night Rose*, an unsold TV pilot that he wrote and directed, and that he describes as "bizarre romance/suspense."

A veteran of both Romero and Laurel productions, Harrison was a logical choice for director when Laurel put the movie *Tales from the Darkside* into gear. The script was already done at that point, but Harrison was able to bring some ideas to the production that would help to shape the film.

When preparing Michael McDowell's "Lover's Vow" segment of *Darkside*, for example, Harrison became concerned that the monster in the script wasn't clearly defined. He talked this over with McDowell, and together they cast about for a type of creature that would be appropriate for the story's New York City setting. They decided to make the monster a living incarnation of the gargoyle rain spouts that adorn some of New York's Gothic architecture. "My concern," recalls Harrison, "was that we really have to know what this creature is and where he comes from. It has to have its own mythology, its own history and reason for being that will make the story more dramatic."

The casting of the film was another area to which Harrison paid special attention. He felt that the right actors could help keep the stories fresh and make the horrific elements more effective. He credits casting agent Julie Mosberg with helping to assemble a group of performers that was a little out of the ordinary for this type of film. "I got together with her early on," Harrison remembers, "and I told her, 'Look, let's avoid the usual horror film culprits and suspects. We could go with Christopher Lee and other people like that, but maybe we can go and attract a Christian Slater or a Debbie Harry.' And Julie came up with a lot of those suggestions." *Heathers* star Slater appears in Doyle's mummy tale, "Lot No. 249," and rock singer Debbie Harry shines in *Darkside*'s sardonic wraparound sequence. Mosberg also came up with an offbeat choice for the hitman hired to rub out the troublesome feline in Stephen King's "Cat from Hell." Instead of an actor typically known for playing heavies, she selected David Johansen, formerly the lead singer of the androgynous New York Dolls and currently masquerading as tongue-in-cheek crooner Buster Poindexter. For the central character of "Lover's Vow," Mosberg provided Harrison with a very pleasant surprise: ace heavy James Remar, who played the rabid Ganz in *48HRS.* and the maniacal Dutch Shultz in *The Cotton Club.*

"I never would have thought that he was here in New York and that he would have been interested in this sort of material," marvels Harrison. "But he walked in the door and said he wanted the role of Preston, the sympathetic hero in 'Lover's Vow.' He had been brought in to read for the hitman part in 'Cat From Hell,' and he said, 'I'll read the killer part for you and I'll do it, but I *really* want this.' "

When Harrison talks about his approach to the *Darkside* movie, it becomes clear that he has some well thought out ideas concerning the elements needed to create a successful horror film. Harrison certainly doesn't seem like a director who would shy away from graphic horror when it is called for—as is to be expected from someone who helped Romero make his outrageous *Dead* movies—yet he is also very mindful of less obvious components. He is clearly intrigued by mood and artful misdirection and the characterization of evil that are needed to underpin the over-the-top scenes, creating the sort of dark tension that one might also find in the works of his favorites, James Cain and Cornell Woolrich.

This attitude can be found in the way he describes his different approaches to each story, approaches that are intended to either underscore the tale's ominous mood or play against the story's horrific content for effect.

"'Lover's Vow' originally came across to me as a fairy tale," he explains. "I wanted its visual style to be against type. Instead of looking like a typical monster story, I wanted it to be a soft fairy tale that's bookended by these two horrible events. 'Lot No. 249,' on the other hand, is classic thriller storytelling, a mummy story with a revenge theme—it just begs to have a 1940s style, a 1940s adven-

(continued on page 64)

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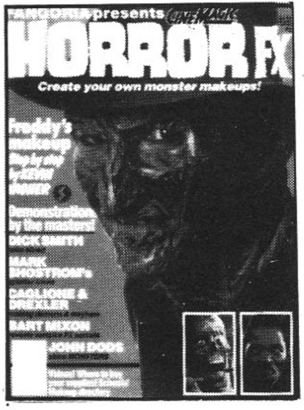

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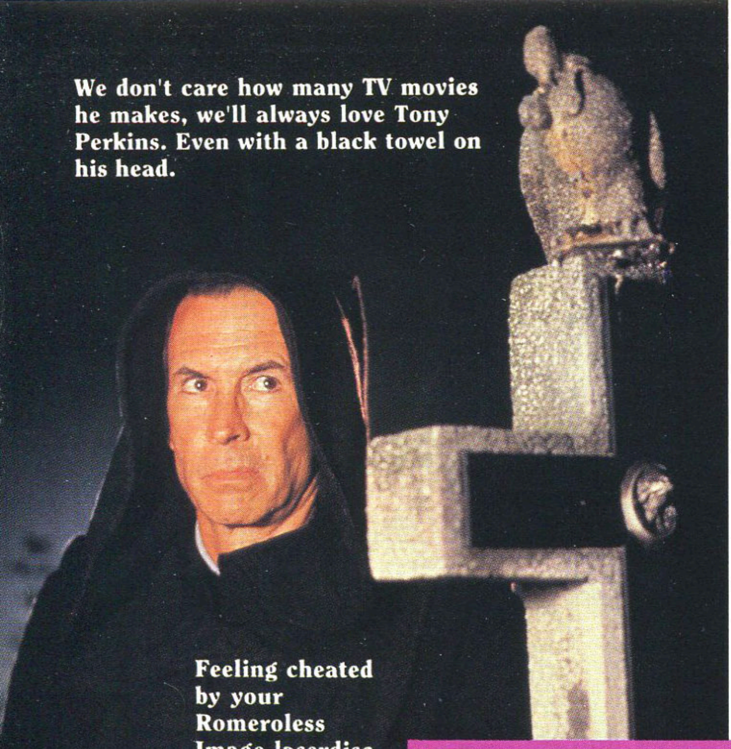
By TIM LUCAS

Does Stuart Gordon Need a New Reagent?

Last January, CBS-TV broadcast one of those made-for-TV horror movies which most GoreZonians—not to mention anyone who has watched one before—habitually bypass. Titled *Daughter of Darkness*, it starred Anthony Perkins and Mia Sara and was filmed on location in Bucharest, Romania. *TV Guide* carried full-page ads for the vampire opus, which were noticeably skimpy on details, unlike the ads networks usually place for tedious tearjerkers, which always note with pride the tasteful directorial guidance of a Karen Arthur or an Ivan Nagy. What's interesting about this particular film is that it was directed by none other than Stuart Gordon (!), a fact which the network did not see fit to advertise.

I passed on *Daughter of Darkness* in favor of Nickelodeon's *Green Acres* rerun, but thanks to an industrious friend's VCR, I was given a second chance to see it and bring you the facts. Sara (the heroine of Ridley Scott's *Legend*) plays a young woman subjected to strange nightmares in the wake of her mother's death, beckoning her to Romania to find her long-lost father. In Bucharest, she stumbles across many of the bizarre landmarks in her dreams and her quest is joined by a taxi driver (Deszu Garas), and a pain in the neck (Jack Coleman) from the American consulate. To make a long and tedious story short, Sara's father turns out to be an aristocratic vampire posing as a glass blower (Perkins, speaking with Lugosi's own marbles in his mouth). Since vampires are dead and cannot conceive,

No longer haunted by the specter of Norman, Anthony Perkins happily wallows in the worst muck the genre can offer.



We don't care how many TV movies he makes, we'll always love Tony Perkins. Even with a black towel on his head.

Feeling cheated by your Romeroless Image laserdisc of *Dawn of the Dead*? Then turn to page 44 for your consolation prize: a profile on screwdriven ghoul John Harrison.

Darkness Photos: Copyright CBS

Photo: Copyright Laurel

this makes Sara something of a ... *maculate conception* (my phrase) and Perkins' flock vote to overthrow their leader and impregnate his daughter to give vent to a new mutant race of "human immortals" (*their* phrase: kind of an oxymoron, eh?) The climax finds Sara and her cabman—who tells her in a slow moment that his great, great grandfather slew Count Dracula himself!—rescuing Count Perkins from his hungry hordes and burning out the nest of undead.

> ***Daughter of Darkness* constitutes nothing less than a tragedy for its star and director.**

Co-producer Andrew Laskos' teleplay has holes you could ride a troika through, like not telling us anything about our heroine's character or background (it's finally thrown out just before the end credits that she's a high school soccer coach!), and, even worse, having her accept at the fade-out the proposal of a hero she hardly knows, just to give this profoundly unromantic movie a whiff of TV-style ardor.

Apparently, Network Standards and Practices won't allow vampirism to be portrayed on CBS in prime time, so, incredibly, there's no blood in this picture, apart from some plasma bags shown briefly in a hospital refrigerator. One vampire woman is staked. In the stomach. She doesn't bleed. And there are *no* fangs; Craig Reardon's special makeup FX equip these TVampires with toothy Venus flytrap tongues!

Daughter of Darkness is well photographed by Ivan Mark, but it constitutes nothing less than a tragedy for its star and director. Anthony Perkins struggled for nearly 20 years to avoid identification with Norman Bates, but now, having followed the shockingly bad *Edge of Sanity* with this effort, he seems content to swan-dive into the deepest (fill in expletive) the genre has to offer. He deserves better. And really, what has happened to Stuart Gordon? With *Re-Animator*, *From Beyond* and *Dolls*, he established himself as one of the most promising and consistent filmmakers working in the genre during the 1980s. There's been nothing associated with his name in the past few years but a chain of unreleased and unrealized projects. The Watchdog hopes he thrives again soon.

"LUCIO, LUCIO, WHEREFORE ART THOU, LUCIO?" "ON THE CUTTING ROOM, FLORIO!"

Last issue's hot-collared bulletin concerning Blockbuster Video's influence on AIP Video's release of *Dangerous Obsession* (a.k.a. Lucio Fulci's *The Devil's Honey*) stands in need of some clarification.

Contrary to the implications of AIP's early reports that the film was being "toned down," the videocassette finally released by them is NOT substantially different than *Il Miele del Diavlo*, the 79-minute Italian-language cassette I (perhaps rashly) suggested interested readers seek out instead. *Dangerous Obsession* remains a frankly erotic, unrated movie, despite nearly *5 minutes* of footage which was admittedly deleted, apparently to ingratiate the release to the high (falutin') standards of Blockbuster Video. Considering their recent deshelving of several unrated titles, it's hard to believe Blockbuster would be stocking this item anyway.

For the record, *Dangerous Obsession* contains only one brief scene not found in the Italian video. It's the first flashback scene in which Blanca Marsillach is given the doll (which becomes her surrogate "baby") by her lover, Stefano Madia, who tells her, "Now you can't say I never think about you." Likewise, *Il Miele del Diavlo* contains only one scene not retained by the AIP version: After Marsillach strikes abducted surgeon Brett Halsey across the face with the butt of an ax, she unbuttons her jeans and raises her sweater to rub his bloodied face over her exposed abdomen.

The thing that continues to haunt me about this release is the title change, because "The Devil's Honey" appears twice in the film as a phrase from a crucial poem. Halsey's second recital of the poem ends the film, giving the original title an unusually powerful resonance. (In fact, the title is the best thing about the picture!)

AIP's *Dangerous Obsession* clocks in at 78 minutes (less than a minute shy of *Il Miele*, though the box reports 83 and the tape label 88!); it is recorded in hi-fi but not, as the box suggests, in stereo. Incidentally, Fulci's own cameo in the film remains in both versions. He plays the old codger operating the jewelry stand in Venice.

If you haven't seen *The Cat o' Nine Tails*, this picture gives away the shock ending. Ha, ha.

THE BUTCHERING OF ARGENTO II

One of Dario Argento's long-awaited, unreleased-to-video titles—*The Cat o' Nine Tails* (*Il Gatto a Nove Code*, 1971), with Karl Malden and James Franciscus—has surfaced on Bingo Video, without much fanfare, for $41.95. The mail order service Videomania reportedly sent advance word to their subscribers that a small video company in Texas was issuing the film in its original widescreen format, but this is unfortunately not the case. The California-based Bingo's tape is attractively boxed, but inside the pretty wrapping (which promises a 112-minute running time though the cassette clocks in at 90 minutes) is a rather muddy transfer of a cut TV print.

Photo: AIP

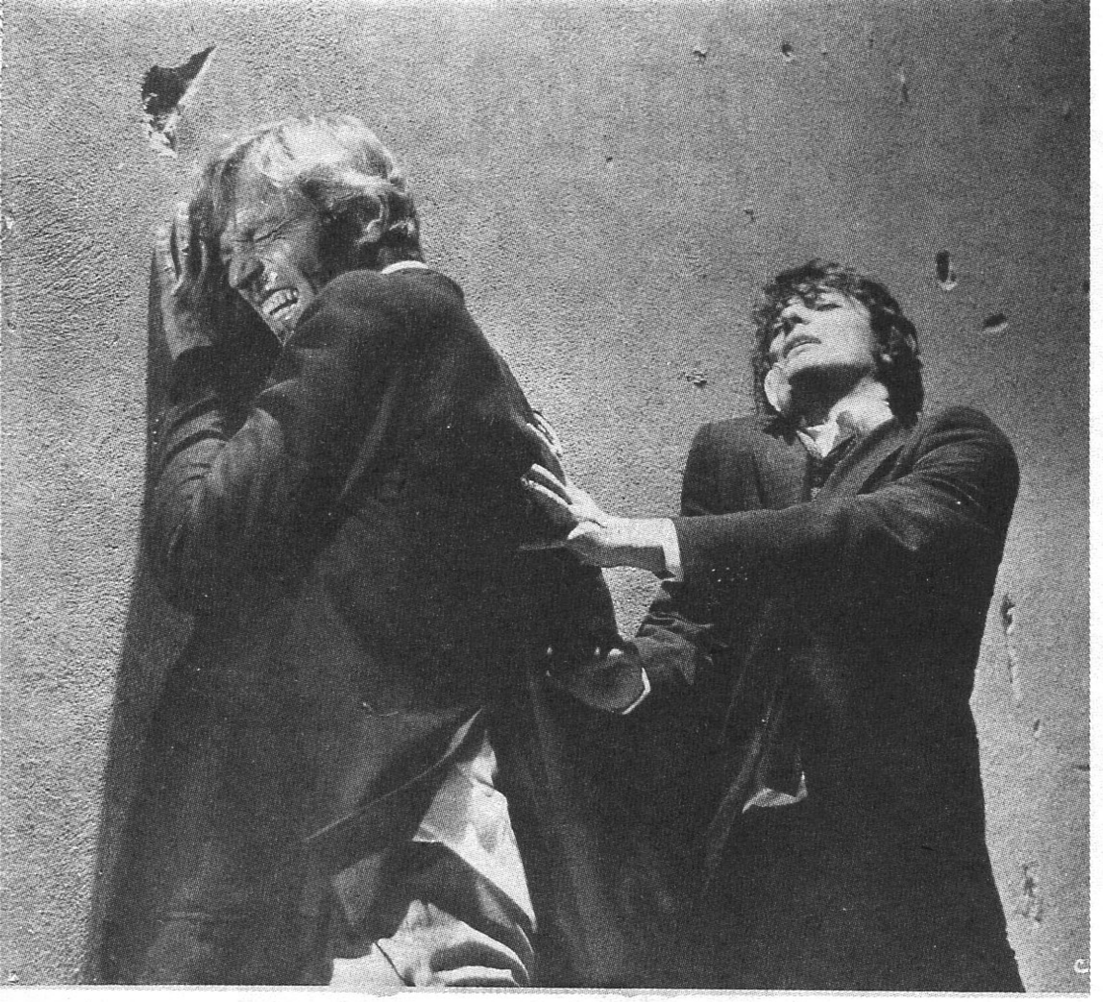
***Dangerous Obsession*, blah! We like *The Devil's Honey*.**

You could hang onto a false Franco film for years without knowing that your "McCoy" is really a "Mickey."

The Cat o' Nine Tails is not one of Argento's most violent works, but the TV print deletes a number of the film's most interesting eccentricities, including a cursing contest in an Italian pub, a weirdly wooden sex scene (which prompted one critic to note that Catherine Spaak was such a dull actress, even her *breasts* were boring!) and some relatively tame violence (i.e. the killer's hands smoking as they slide down the cables of an open elevator shaft). The movie was originally released with a GP rating, making the cuts all the more petty and aggravating.

The movie was released here theatrically by National General Pictures, and the fact that they're long out of business has resulted in many of their pictures being released as "public domain" material. Bingo Video isn't to blame for the cuts; they simply got stuck with a bum, quasi-PD print—which itself suggests that Dario Argento, who oversaw the video release of an impeccable *Suspiria* last year and presumably retains the domestic video rights to the uncut *Cat*, isn't aware of this release.

A much happier Argento release is Image Entertainment's laserdisc of *The Bird with the Crystal Plumage* which, like their forthcoming *Suspiria*, is presented in the letterboxed format. The transfer quality is excellent, in fact superior to the version released in Japan by RCA/Columbia Video that imposed a 1.85:1 screen ratio on the film (which was lensed



Never mind the box copy, Bingo Video's *Cat o' Nine Tails* clocks in at a thoroughly infuriating 90 minutes.

in Techniscope, a ratio of 2.35:1). What this means is best illustrated by the opening credits sequence: On the Image disc, the credits are entirely visible onscreen with room to spare, whereas the Columbia transfer crops off the first or last letter of the names, depending on which side of the screen they appear. The only drawback to the Image release is that they worked from the original negative of the UMC (American distributor) print, which lost a few frames of violent/erotic footage (see "The Butchering of Argento," FANGORIA #66) to secure a GP rating and was printed by Eastmancolor, so the film isn't as complete or as vibrantly colorful as the Japanese version, which worked from a IB-Technicolor print. If asked to pick one version over another, I'd have a tough time of it. They're both great, but at only $35.95 (and no three-month wait for delivery!), the Image disc is virtually inarguable.

The nice folks at Image should be commended for threatening to become the "Criterion" of Carnage, but they still need to iron out some tics in their packaging department. When they released *Dawn of the Dead* on laserdisc a while back, their sleeve promised that the film program would be followed by an exclusive interview with director George A. Romero. Trouble is, it never showed up on the disc. (Legend has it that the filmed interview was tardy in arriving, and, rather than ship late or suffer the expense of reprinting the sleeves, Image simply sent *Dawn* out in sucker packaging.) In a less cheatish gaffe, *Bird*'s sleeve claims the film is presented "In Italian with English subtitles," but inside is the same dubbed version we've always had. Don't feel shortchanged. The movie wasn't shot with direct sound and, as you can tell by the lip movements of the lead actors, it wasn't acted in Italian. All versions of the film were dubbed, but this is the only version retaining the actual voices of Tony Musante and Suzy Kendall.

I'm told that Image Entertainment is open to suggestions concerning future releases, and I've heard that they've taken a lot of flak from pork-headed consumers who object to classy laserphile releases of anything as loathsome and lowly as—hrumph!—*horror* films. If you'd like to make suggestions or simply to lend encouragement to a superior enterprise, write them at 9333 Oso Avenue, Chatsworth, CA 91311. Tell them the Video Watchdog sent you.

GET WHAT YOU KNOW BEFORE YOU WANT IT

Some paragraphs ago, your eyes may have grazed over the name Videomania. It's a handy little mail order company based in Chicago, which I commended last issue for announcing the release of an uncut, 95-minute version of the Paul Naschy opus *Count Dracula's Great Love*.

GoreZonians should be warned that the Watchdog has since heard from a number of friends and correspondents that Videomania's ads and catalogs should not always be taken at their word. I know, for instance, of several people who ordered copies of *Werewolf in a Girl's Dormitory* and have been waiting since last summer. Videomania continues to accept advance orders on tapes which may not be released till months later and although their ads say, "Don't settle for bootlegs & dupes!", numerous titles—like Al Adamson's *Dracula vs. Frankenstein* —are exactly that, sent out in photocopied ad slipcases. Their catalogs habitually misidentify titles and their filmmakers (e.g. a Venezuelan film misidentified as a Jess Franco film, and *Scream of the Caged Virgins*—pitched as Jean Rollin's rare *Requiem Pour un Vampire*, in English—turned out to be a retitling of that PD eyesore *Tower of the Screaming Virgins*). Most distressingly of all, Videomania's "uncut" *Count Dracula's Great Love*—reportedly authorized by Paul Naschy himself—is only a hoax; the tape turns out to be the 83-minute version already available from Sinister Cinema and in the public domain. Since Videomania is a purchase-only operation—no rentals—such errors can be mightily expensive.

It's one thing to buy a mistitled movie and arrange a speedy refund but, knowing The Great Man's penchant for pseudonyms, you could hang onto a false Franco film for years without knowing that your "McCoy" is really a "Mickey."

There may be some very good, well-priced items in their catalogs, but the Watchdog urges you to be careful (and most of all knowledgeable) when ordering—from anywhere.

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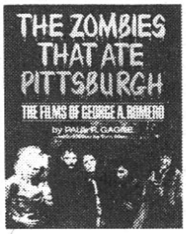
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By DOUG DREXLER

CAGLIONE & DREXLER'S MAKEUP FX LAB

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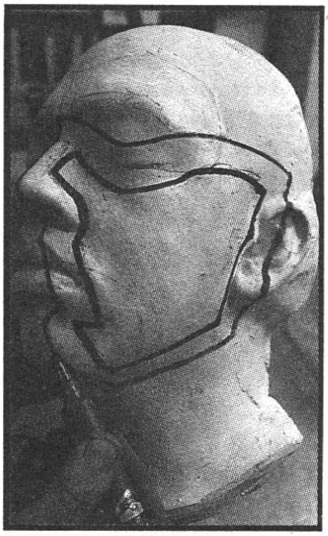


All Photos: Copyright 1990 Caglione & Drexler

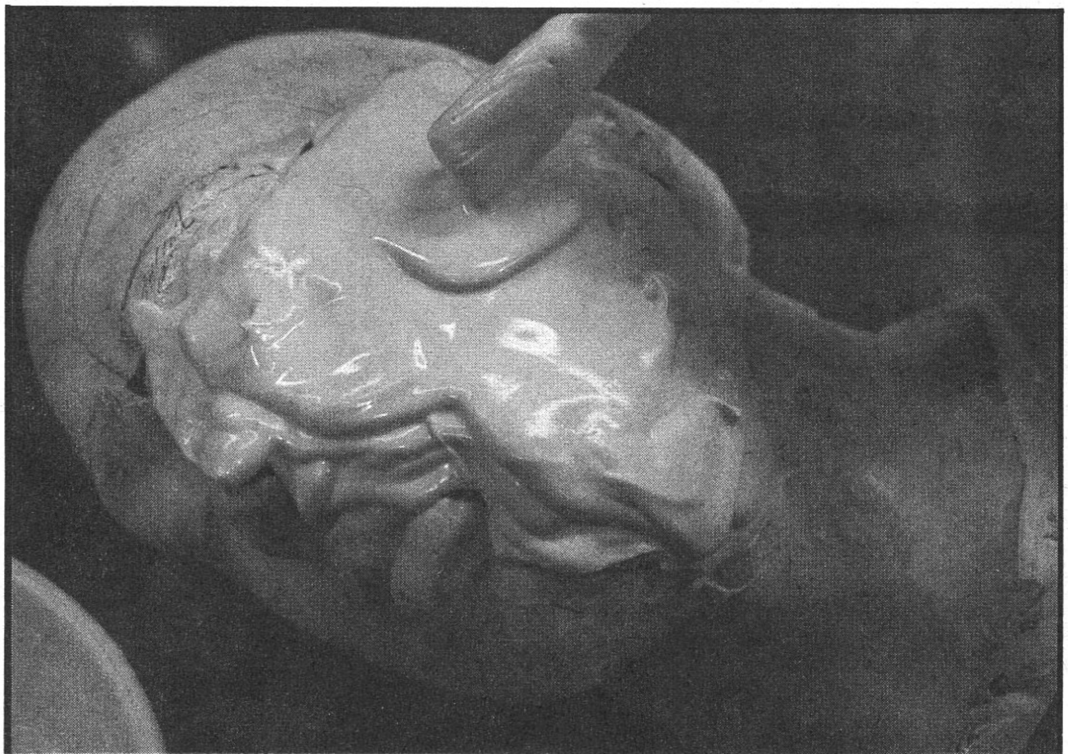
STEP 1: We start with a clean life mask. The inner line represents the perimeter of the appliance. The outer line demonstrates how far we intend to take the mold beyond the appliance, leaving enough room for cutting edges and keys. Vaseline the mask carefully.

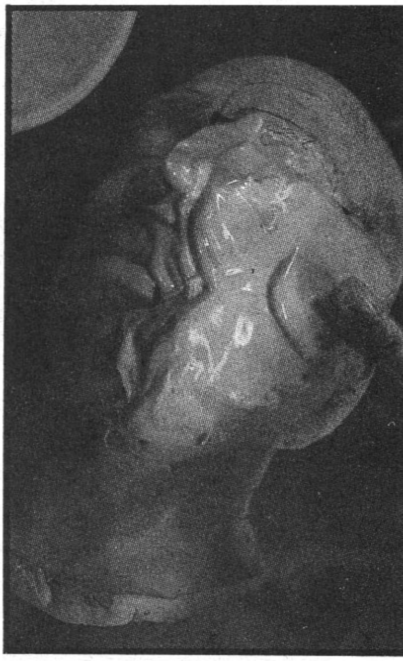
STEP 2: Mix your Hydrocal as described in GOREZONE #7. At this point, the plaster is in its most fluid state.

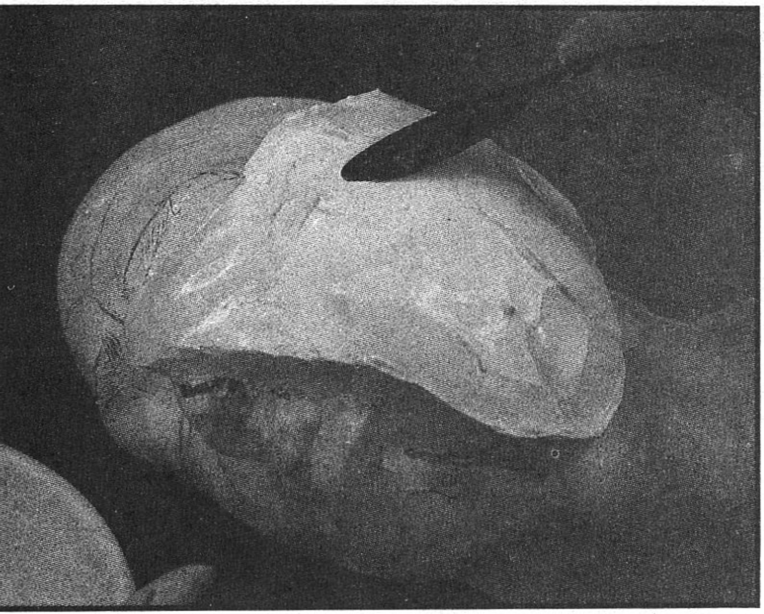
We're sure that you're scratching your head wondering where to dig up all the goodies used to fabricate our cylinder mold. Well, pilgrim, your search has ended. Everything you need and more can be found in Sandy Burman's new product catalog. This booklet is an education in itself and fully illustrated with photographs. In addition, the prices are competitive and in many cases much cheaper than other suppliers. Send $2.50 to Burman Foam Latex, 7547 Woodman Place, Van Nuys, CA 91405. In the meantime, enjoy the following How-to.

For running foamed latex, the cylinder mold is the most stable and trustworthy. It is useful when breaking large makeups into smaller appliances. This cylinder mold will accommodate a side-of-the-face appliance. Let's run through the fabrication.

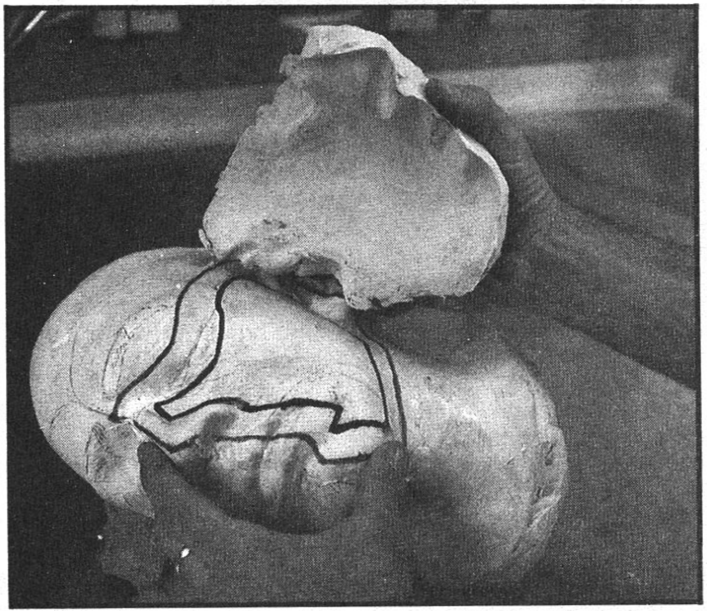
STEP 3: As you can see, the Hydrocal is starting to thicken. This makes building the material up easy.





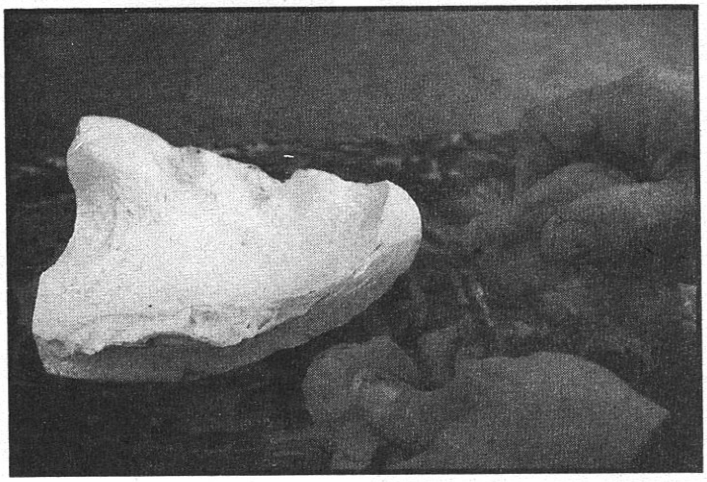


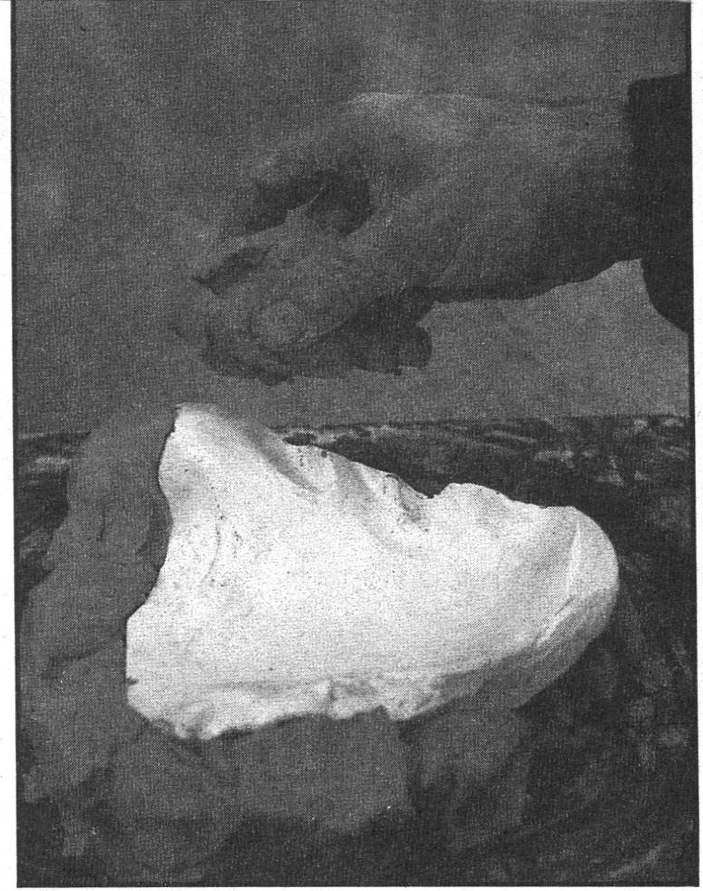
STEP 4: It's a snap—a snap *mold*, that is. As the plaster sets, it will begin to heat up. Once cooled, you will be able to remove it from the life mask.



STEP 5: As you can see, the snap separates easily from the life mask. We now have a negative mold from which to fabricate a cylinder.

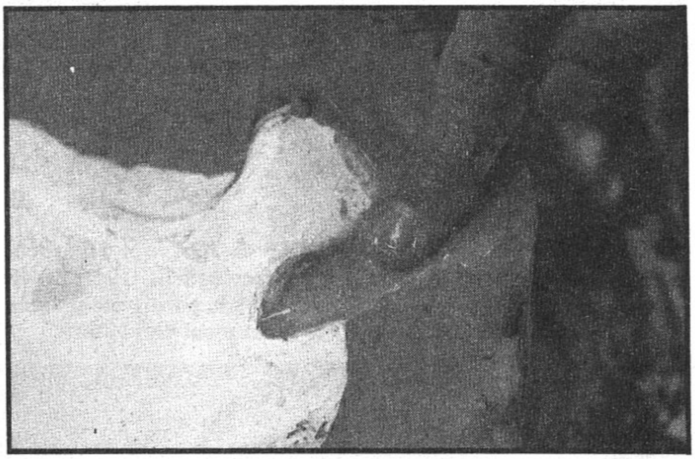
STEP 6: Secure the snap with some water clay, detail side up, on a mold board.



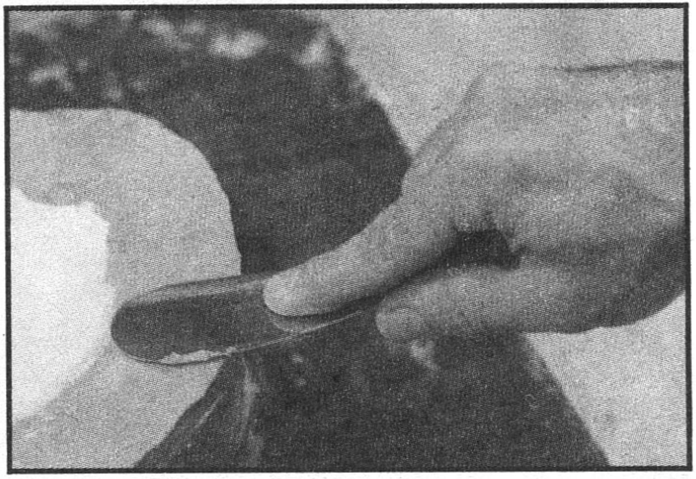


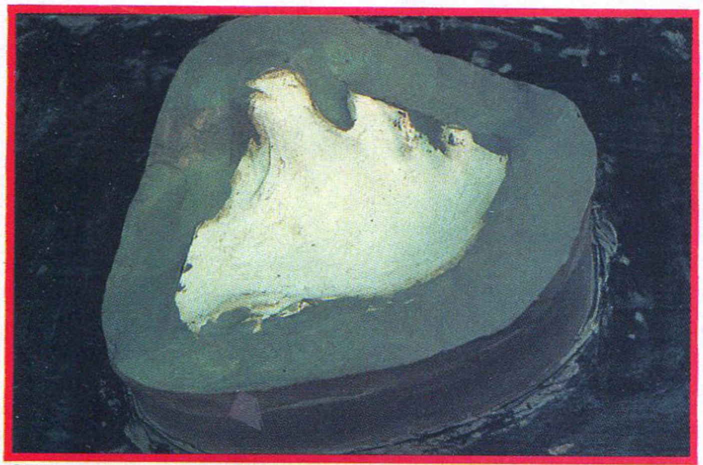
STEP 7: Begin building the perimeter of the snap out with more water clay.

STEP 8: Carefully blend the clay to meet the contours of the snap mold.

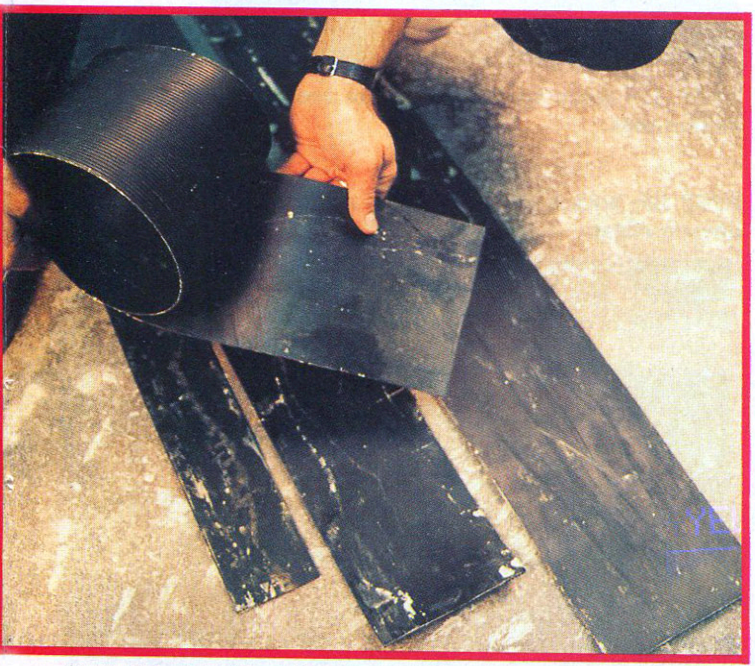


STEP 9: Square the clay off, using a plaster spatula.



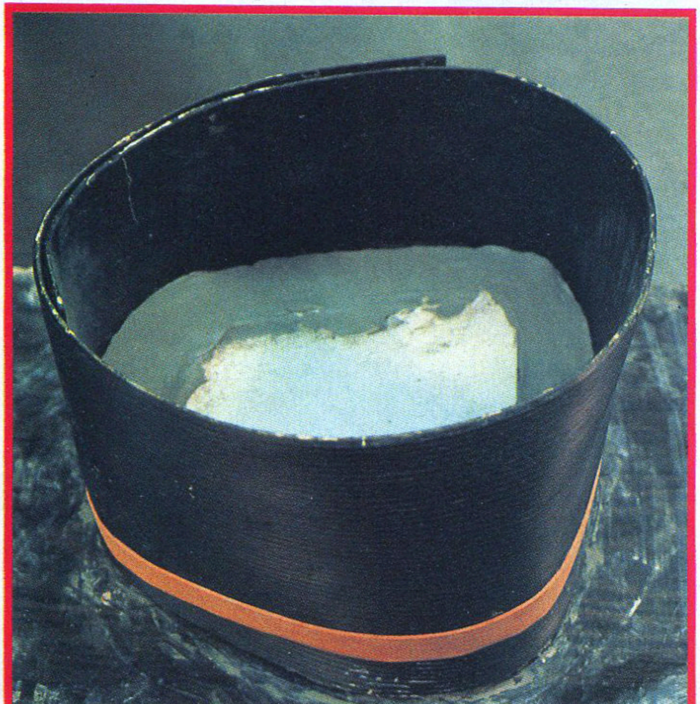


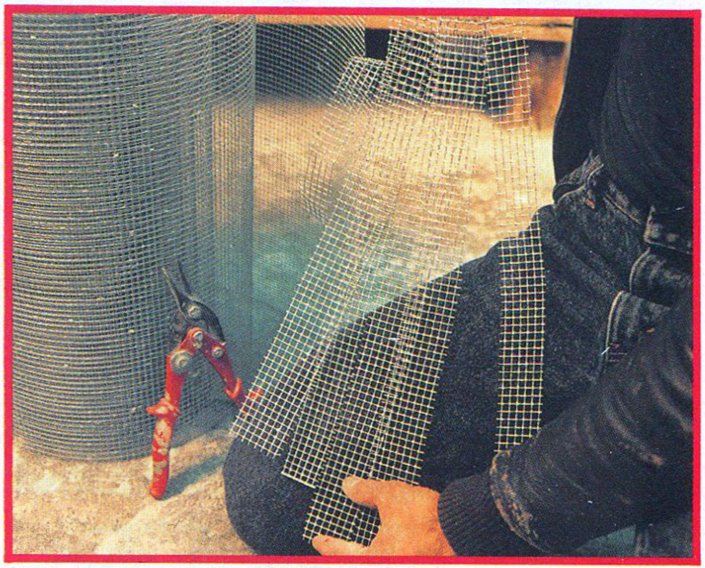
STEP 10: Compare this shot to photo 1. See? We've got the finished cylinder mold in negative form.



STEP 11: A rubber floor mat sliced into strips will aid us in our quest.

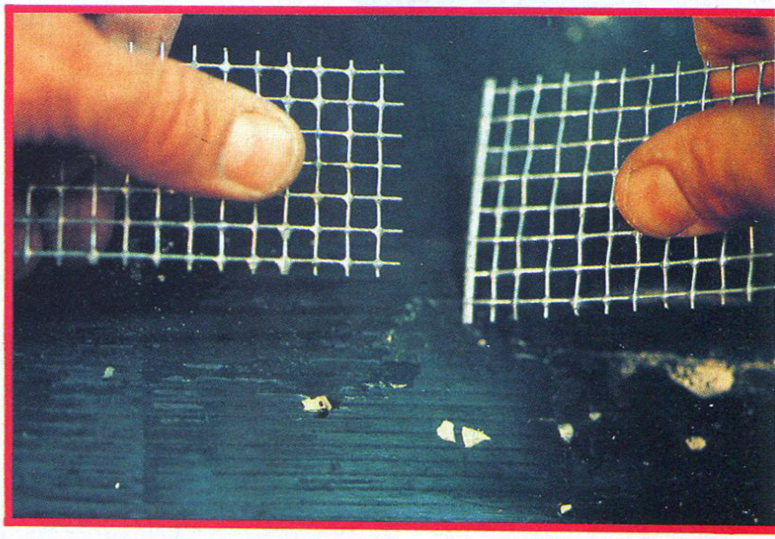
STEP 12: Choosing a suitable width, we wrap it around our negative, securing it with a rubber mold band.

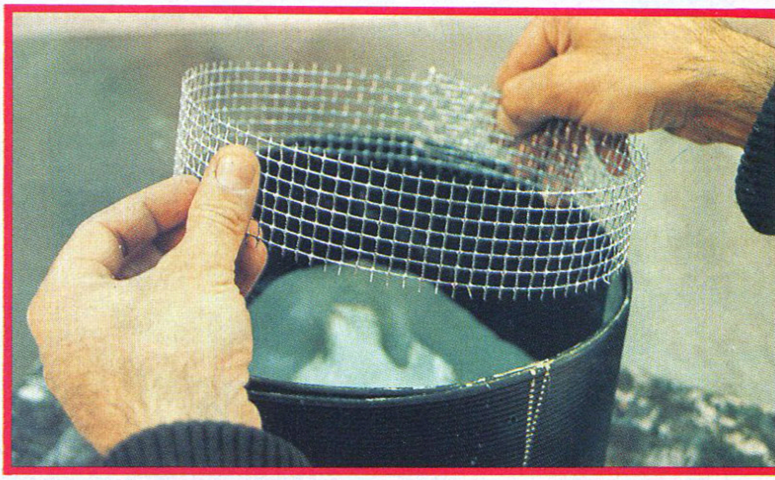




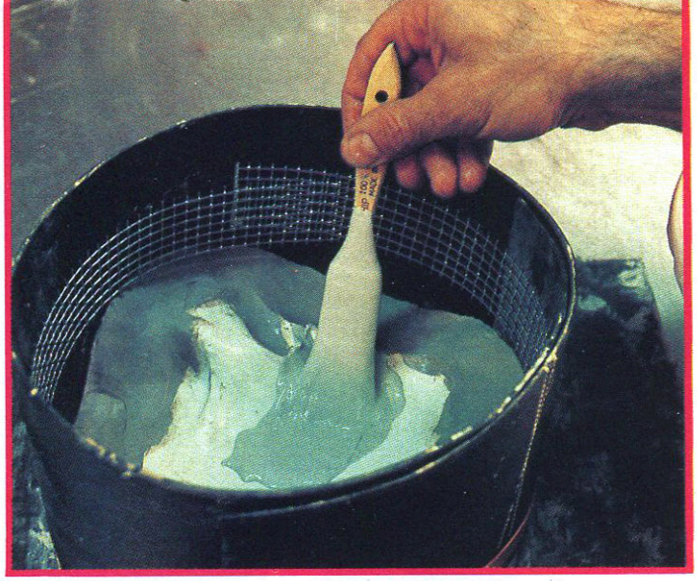
STEP 13: The next item is hardware cloth, available at—you guessed it!—the hardware store. Cut into strips and incorporate them into the cylinder mold, for a dandy reinforcement.

STEP 14: When cutting the hardware cloth, leave one end pronged.

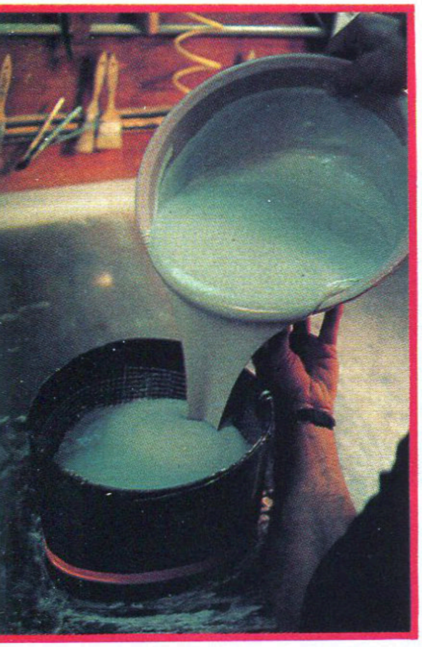




STEP 15: Now wrap the hardware cloth into a ring just big enough to fit snugly within the rubber matting that surrounds the negative cylinder mold. The prongs on the hardware cloth can be bent into hooks, securing the ring to itself.



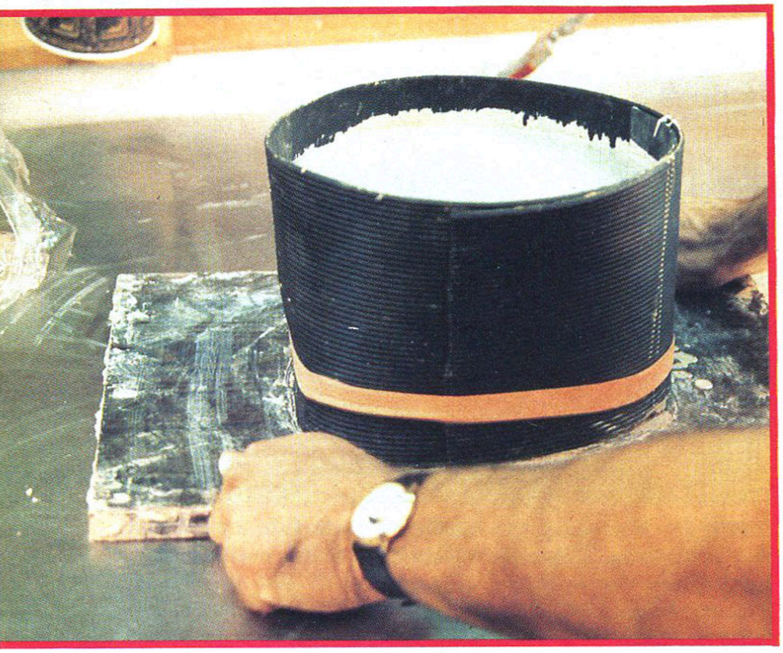
STEP 16: Having Vaselined the negative mold's plaster part, mix your Ultracal. When applying the material, start with a brush.

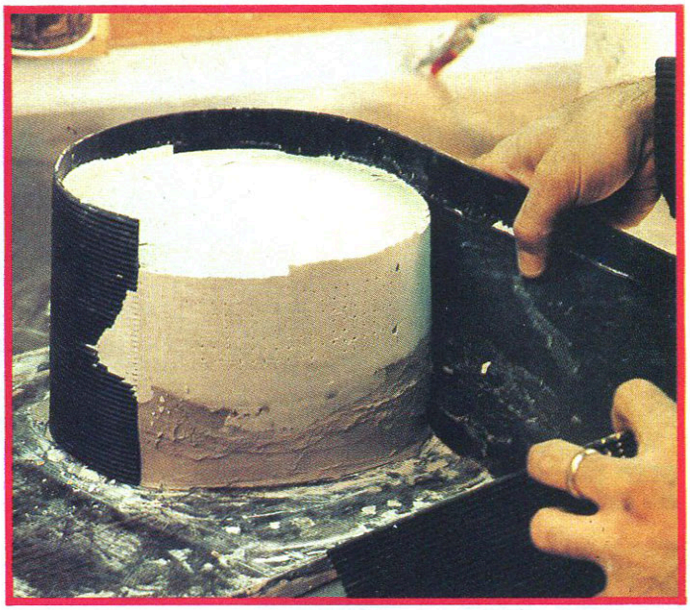


STEP 17: Once the entire surface has been brushed, carefully pour the Ultracal into the mold. Be sure to submerge the cloth.

It's a snap—
a snap *mold.*

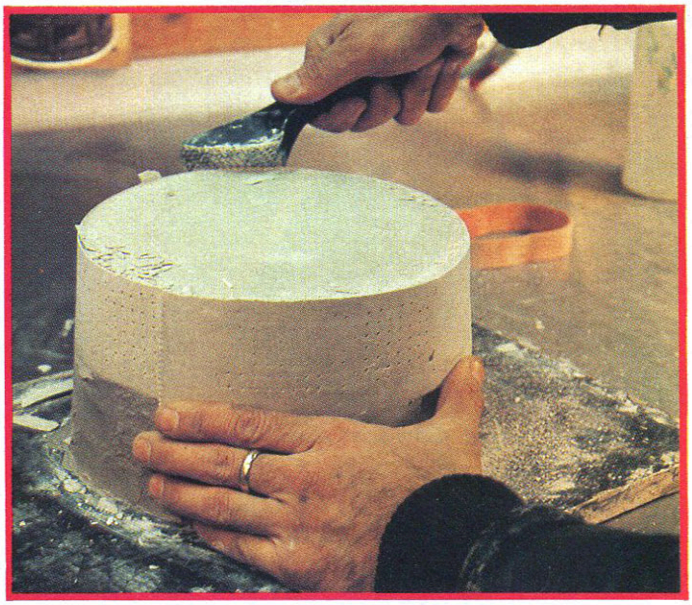
STEP 18: With both hands, grab the mold board and vibrate gently. This action will free any bubbles that may have become trapped when you poured the Ultracal.



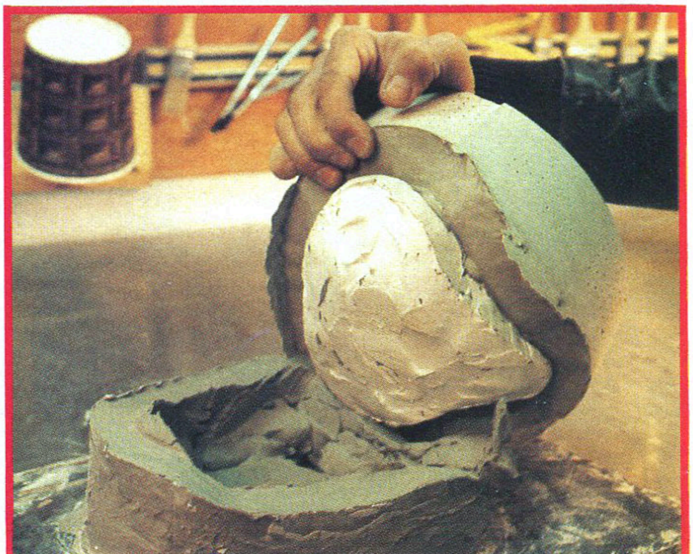


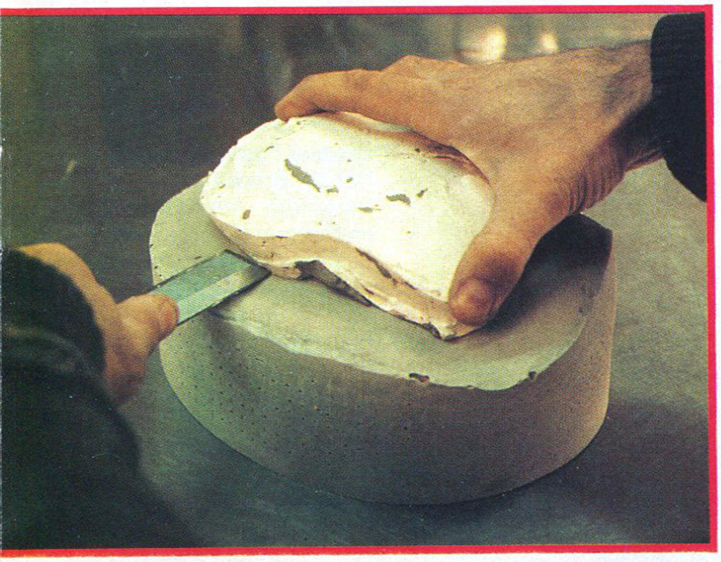
STEP 19: Once the Ultracal has cooled, unwrap the rubber mat.

STEP 20: With a sureform rasp, clean up any sharp or uneven edges.



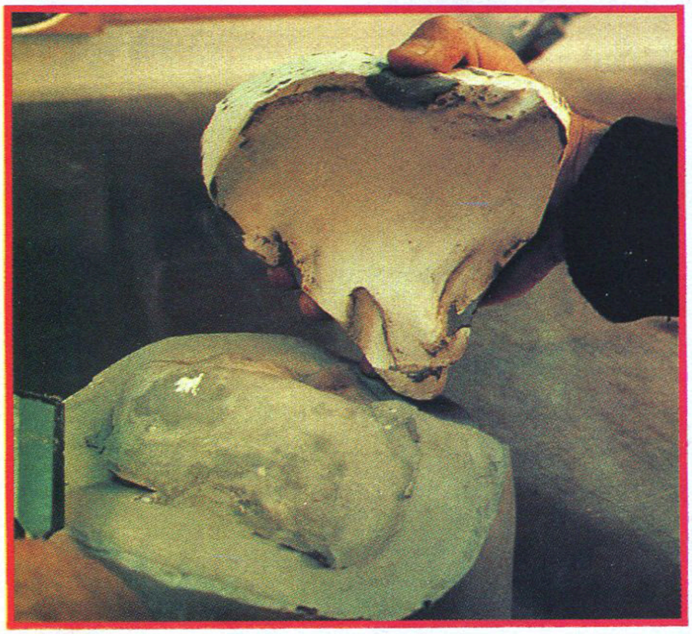
STEP 21: Pulling the completed cylinder mold free from its water clay base, you can see that the snap is locked onto the Ultracal.



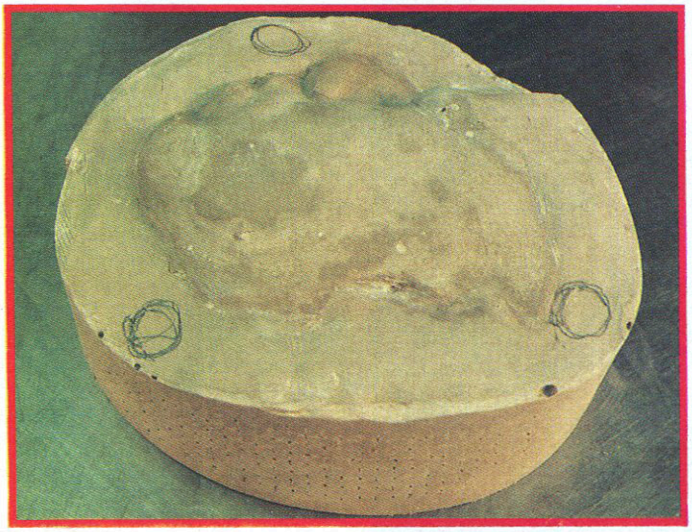


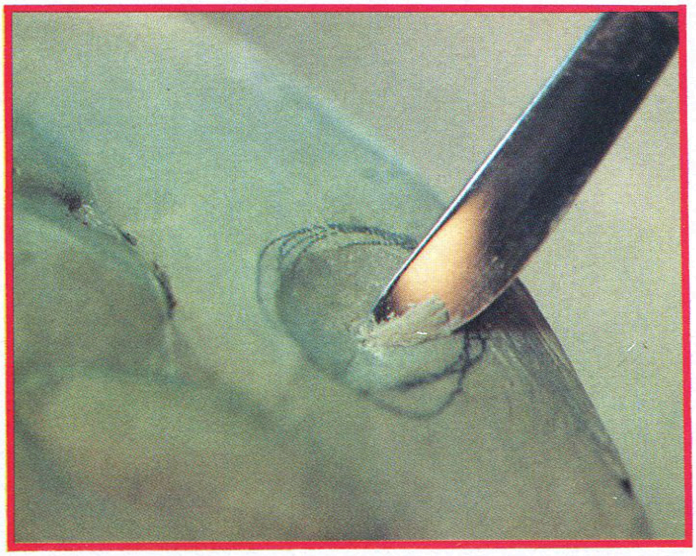
STEP 22: Using a chisel, pry the snap free from the cylinder mold.

STEP 23: Voila! The snap is free. We're ready to cut keys.



STEP 24: Using a pencil, mark position and size of your keys. Be sure that they are evenly spaced.





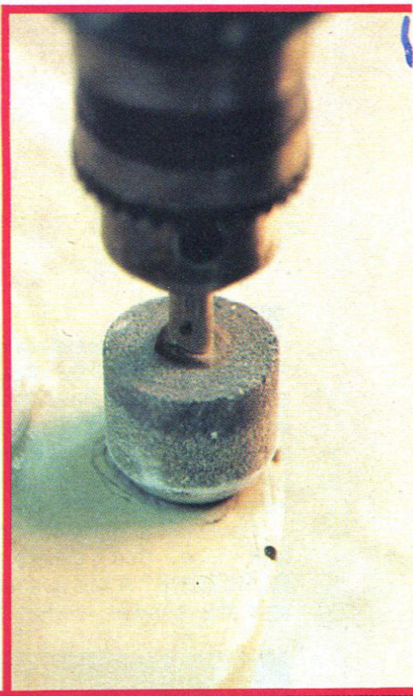
STEP 25: I like to start the key with a scalpel, rough-drafting its form.

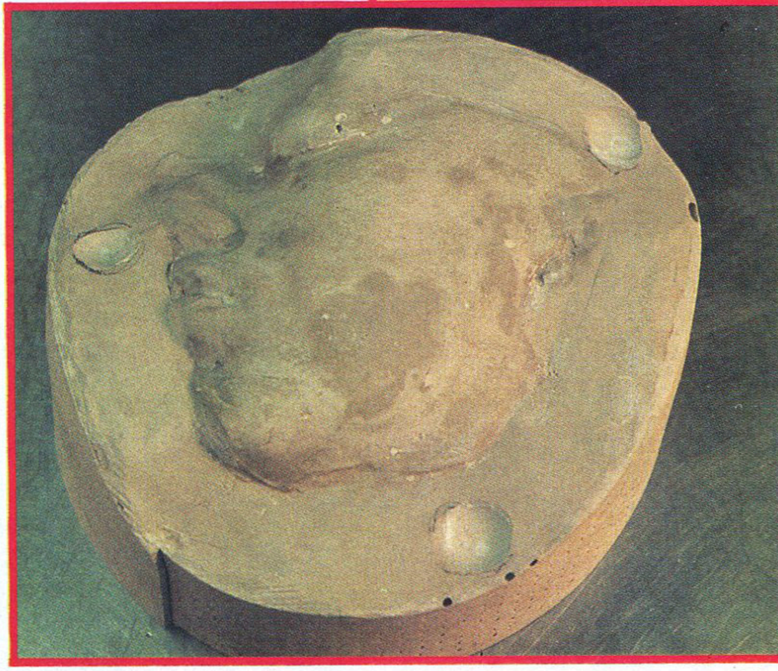
STEP 26: Finish the key with a half-rounded grinding bit and a quarter-inch drill. Perfect!

STEP 27: The finished cylinder mold, ready to dress with your sculpture!

This brings to a close another lab. Hit the clay and never give up! Cag and Drex here, wishing you the very best in all your endeavors! *Hailing frequencies closed.*

NOTE: Caglione & Drexler and STARLOG Communications Inc. accept no liability in the use of the materials discussed in this workshop.





HorrorScope

Hall's Horrors

"I was trying to come up with something a little classy, something like a Touchstone comedy. What I finally came up with was a film that's been picked up as a movie of the week for television."

Now wait a second, what's talk like this doing in GOREZONE? A fair question, and the answer is that the speaker has also transformed Bobbie Bresee into a horrific, insectoid monster, sent murderous puppets after Paul LeMat, and—most frightening of all—turned Linnea Quigley into a nerd! Oh, and he's also the only writer/director to have worked with Charles Band, David DeCoteau *and* Fred Olen Ray, the three heirs apparent to Roger Corman's B-producer mantle. Meet Kenneth J. Hall, the latest FX artist to make it to the directing leagues.

Nightmare SISTERS

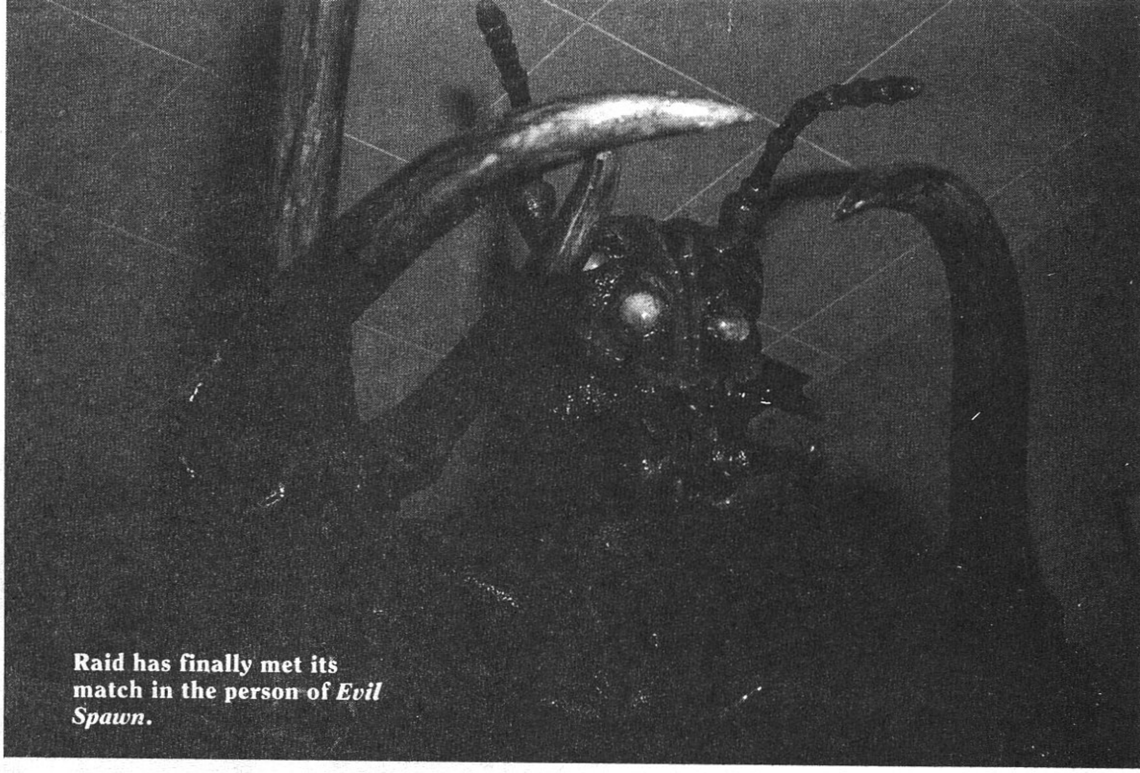
"My kind of woman," muses director/writer Ken Hall.

Ghost Writer, the network-bound film that also recently hit the cassette racks from Prism Video, is the second movie Hall has directed (having also written six others), but it's the first he's happy with. His first experience behind the camera, following FX work on films like *Spacehunter*, *Metalstorm*, *Terminator* and *Ghoulies*, was on *Evil Spawn*, a project Ray gave Hall following Hall's scripting *The Tomb* for Ray. "Fred was doing a little project called *The Wasp*," Hall recalls, "and he'd only actually

At last, a horror video that makes its own cuts.

shot a day on the film, just a couple of scenes that could be spliced together for a promo reel. Then he had decided he didn't want to finish it, so he offered it to me. It was shot in all of nine days, including the day of footage Fred shot, for a budget of under $30,000 on 16mm." The result was a film Hall now dismisses as "a really dreadful picture, but it does deliver the groceries. It's not one of those movies that features some hideous creature on the box that never shows up in the film."

Eventually, Hall linked up with DeCoteau, who had recently completed his own 10-day wonder, *Dreamaniac*. For DeCoteau, Hall wrote the nerds vs. succubus tale *Nightmare Sisters* (a quickie even by DeCoteau's standards), and then scripted the teen-sex-and-aliens comedy *I Was a Teenage Sex Mutant*. In a rare case of a DeCoteau monicker growing less outrageous with time, the movie was released on Paramount Home Video as *Dr. Alien*.


Raid has finally met its match in the person of *Evil Spawn*.

Photos: Courtesy Take 4 Publicity

***Ghost Writer*, written and directed by Ken Hall, is an unlikely combination of horror and hairspray.**

It was the casting of Judy Landers as the alien (a role Hall originally envisioned for Mary Woronov) that led to Hall's writing and directing *Ghost Writer*. He remembers, "I got a call from Ruth Landers, who was Judy and Audrey's mother as well as their manager, and she had liked my script for *Dr. Alien* and wanted me to pitch ideas for a feature they could produce. What struck me when I met Audrey was how different she and Judy were in looks and personality, yet everyone would refer to them as twins. And I wanted to come up with an idea that would play up the contrast between the two."

The story Hall ultimately wrote and directed features Audrey as a writer for a movie star magazine and Judy as the ghost of a '50s sex symbol. The actress was supposedly a suicide, but her ghost contends it was murder, and teams with the writer to find the killer. "It doesn't take Sherlock Holmes to figure out the parallel with Marilyn Monroe," laughs Hall. "This is the most satisfying of the films I've done on a number of levels. I thought it turned out well, especially considering the budget and the schedule." Not only has NBC slotted the film for prime time, but they're considering developing it into a series as well. "That's a very pleasant surprise for all of us," Hall says.

On a more violent note, Hall's most recent creation is *Linnea Quigley's Horror Workout*, the first-ever exercise video in which all the participants are either dead or doomed to get that way. If it sounds like a joke, that's because it started out that way. Hall had been visiting the set of DeCoteau's *Murder Weapon*. "They were shooting a scene where Linnea's bashing some guy's head in with a sledgehammer," Hall recalls. "It was pretty hysterical, because they were using a rubber sledgehammer that was at least as big as Linnea was, and the way they were shooting it, it looked really mechanical. And I said, 'This looks like an exercise routine, we could do Linnea Quigley's Horror Workout. And everybody laughed, and while they were cracking up, I thought, 'Hey, that isn't a bad idea.' I talked it over with Linnea, and she like the idea and called a couple of people, and we had the financing in a couple of hours."

But after all these comic ghosts and aerobicizing zombies, does Hall ever intend to get serious about his horror? Well, he has worked on the scripts for the straight terror pics *Terror Night* and *Puppetmaster*, and has been working on *13 Tales of Terror*, a project containing a baker's dozen short shockers and blackouts. But even on this assignment, he says, "The request was to keep the tone light—like the old *Twilight Zones* with a touch of Monty Python." Of his focus on comic horror, he says, "It's not that I have a preference as far as either direction. I've got a couple of straight horror ideas, and I like the genre. It's just that nowadays when you say horror to producers, they associate it with the chop-up-the-kids-with-garden tools sort of thing. Comedy is in greater demand now, and more fantasy-oriented things are coming back into vogue." However, he concludes, "If a project calls for R-rated violence and gore, I have no problem with that."

—*Michael Gingold*

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ARGENTO

(continued from page 21)

and son—each with a little white patch, just like the cat in the story. I studied them when I was writing, watching the way they move, the way they watch things and sit perfectly still. It's destiny that I'm making a film with cats.

GZ: In addition to the ordinary cats, the movie also features a litter of demonic kittens.

Argento: Yes, alien cats. Of course, they're not in the original story, where the man discovers he has walled up his cat—the black cat—with the body of the woman he has murdered. In the film, the cat is female, and she has kittens behind the wall. These little cats are mutated. Their souls are warped. They're blind because they were born into a terrible darkness.

You know that for centuries cats, and especially black cats, were treated as incarnations of witches. Black cats have been haunted by these beliefs. For centuries, they were hanged and burned and drowned. So they're different from other cats. They're more secretive, they keep to themselves. Look at them and you know something goes on in there.

GZ: You originally wanted to have four directors on this picture, but couldn't work it out in terms of scheduling. Would you consider producing another film with the other two?

Argento: It's true, I wanted to have John Carpenter and Wes Craven. You never know what might happen in the future. Recently, I heard that Carpenter and Stephen King are going to be working on an Edgar Allan Poe picture together. Obviously many people have thought about Poe and see the same things I do in his work, so maybe we'll be seeing many, many Poe pictures in the coming years.

I also have a contract to make a new film of my own, but I don't know yet what I'm going to do. Each film I make changes me in some way. When I start the picture I'm one person, and by the time I finish I'm another. I'm not yet finished with *Two Evil Eyes*, so I don't know what person I'll be when it's over.

BRIDE

(continued from page 26)

eagerly awaited *Bride of Re-Animator*, he gets his cake and eats it too. Producer-director Yuzna will be liable for most of the credit—or the blame—for the completed film. Yuzna sees *Bride of Re-Animator* as both a homage to the original *Frankenstein* novel as well as a continuation of the Herbert West saga; the auteur is enamored, even slightly obsessed, with the Frankenstein myth. "In 1818, Mary Shelley wrote *the* story for modern horror," Yuzna states. "The whole Nietzchean thing—West is the Superman, and he and Dan Cain are the two sides of Victor Frankenstein."

Bride begins at the exact moment of Meg Halsey's death and follows West and Cain's attempts to not only reanimate the dead, but also create new life forms in their cryptside laboratory. Preview audiences have liked what they've seen, and Yuzna appears honest and forthright when discussing his obligation to deliver the groceries. "It is *very* important to me that we don't disappoint the fans," he swears. "People want to celebrate the first film. They want to go and enjoy that remembrance." He also readily acknowledges Stuart Gordon's influence and artistic vision when assessing the merits of his own film. (Gordon was uninvolved with the sequel, since the original starting date for his new film *Pit and the Pendulum* coincided exactly with the start-up time for *Bride of Re-Animator*.) "I'm sure Stuart feels a little bit of ambivalence," Yuzna decides, "but because of the nature of this business, it just couldn't wait any longer. If *Bride*'s successful, he can certainly take much credit for having started it all."

As Yuzna finishes up with the final mix on *Bride of Re-Animator*, he's already begun preproduction work on yet another Wild Street production, an announced $8 million adaptation of H.G. Wells' classic *Invisible Man*. One thing's for sure, though: With credentials as solid as his, Brian Yuzna needn't worry about disappearing from the genre scene for a long time to come.

DARKSIDE

(continued from page 48)

ture look. So we shot it very classically, all wide-angle lenses, static cameras with people moving in and out of frame rather than moving the camera around. 'Cat from Hell' is this very cold, nasty suspense tale, and that's how we shot it. It's not black-and-white, but it has that feeling to it, that edge."

When talking about the wraparound sequence featuring Debbie Harry, Harrison describes the material as "*Scheherazade* meets *Hansel and Gretel*." "There we have Debbie Harry, this calm, almost somnambulistic Westchester housewife wandering around her beautiful $500,000 kitchen preparing a dinner party—and she just happens to have this cute little boy caged in the background," Harrison snickers. "And it's the boy who tells the stories. So we played up the ironic humor of it by shooting it very much like a slick commercial."

As for creating the highpoints of horror, Harrison refers back to things he learned from George Romero. Harrison discusses the problem of how to shoot a scene and then manipulate it in the editing room in order to create what he calls a jump. He emphasizes that even though this is a technical skill, it's something that has to be learned intuitively. "That's not something you teach somebody," he points out. "You don't say to somebody, 'OK, now you add three frames here and you do this and then all of a sudden the audience is going to gasp or scream or whatever.' You learn this by observing somebody like George, who is such a master at this sort of thing.

"And it's not just a matter of technical tricks," he adds. "You have to develop an idea of what fear is. For me, fear is what you can't see, or what you can't deal with. Or sometimes terror might be a matter of coming face to face with the menace and not being able to escape. In all these cases, there has to be the element of suspense there. These aren't things you can be taught in film school. You have to feel them. You have to know what frightens *you*."

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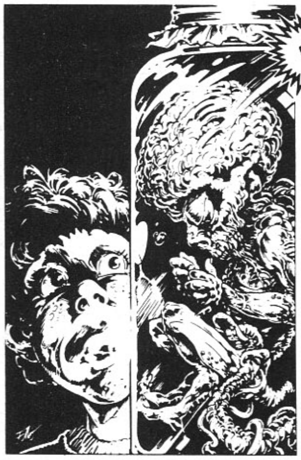

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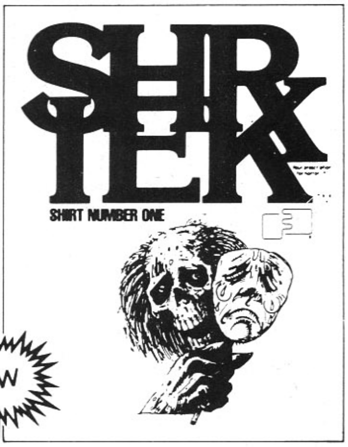

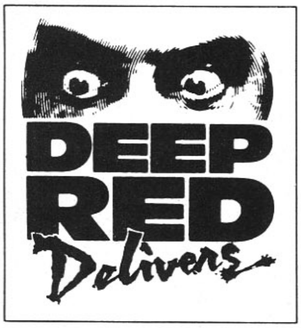

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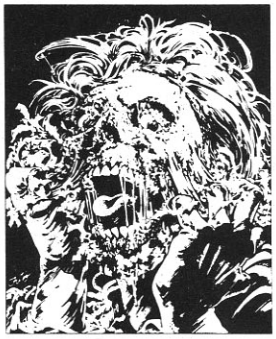

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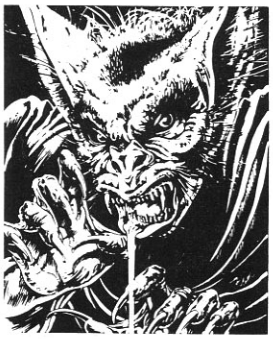

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For instance, some of the advertisements we refuse to run would curl your hair. "GRUESOME AUTO WRECK PIX! Whole collection $25!" Sorry, friend, we're not into real-life horror. "LOCKS OF CHARLES MANSON'S HAIR! Make your own fiber sculptures!" Now, how do you authenticate something like that? And do we want the Better Business Bureau joining the ranks of the Know-it-alls Against Horror brigade at our door? Uh-uh. The raunch-o ads go in the circular file. (With the occasional exception, like the Naked Women's Boxing videos someone from Thailand sent us.)

No, the GoreZonian demands more out of a literary experience. The GoreZonian needs up-to-the-minute, no-beatin'-around-the-bush information and entertainment. And we aim to give it to you.

In upcoming months, we'll ply you with a Steve Johnson article, updating you on everything in the FX maestro's thriving career—especially his latest, HIGHWAY TO HELL, which features a cop from the titular netherworld and enough bizarreness to keep you out from behind the wheel for months.

In the mood for school? Of course not. Who is? Well, maybe things would be different if you had the teachers in CLASS OF 1999, the high-octane, hyperviolent sequel to *Class of 1984*. With *It's Alive*'s John P. Ryan, exploitation queen Pam Grier and tough guy Patrick Kilpatrick on staff, this ain't your regular campus, Jack.

Did someone say Italy? Then here's something you don't see every day: exclusive interviews with gore icons Joe (BURIED ALIVE) D'Amato, Umberto (MAKE THEM DIE SLOWLY) Lenzi and Ruggero (CANNIBAL HOLOCAUST) Deodato! If your appetite for Eurosplatter has been whetted by Chas. Balun and the Video Watchdog, this will be your chance to go hog wild!

As always, each issue will be crammed with the latest news, reviews and previews, and those of weak constitution enter at their own risk. The fun carries on with GOREZONE #15!

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